ethnographers put the Kurama in a class by themselves as descendants of nomads (Kirgiz, i.e. Kazak) who have become agriculturists (Sarts, *q.v.*). In spite of the adoption of the Sart mode of life, the Kurama never quite lost their particular characteristics inherited from their nomadic ancestors.

This could still be seen in the early 20th century. Unlike the Sarts, the Kurama lived, like the Ḳazaḳ, in yurts; their wives, as with the Ḳazaḳ, were unveiled. In other respects, however, the Kurama had advanced further from their nomadic ancestors than they had at the beginning of Russian rule. At that time, Radloff and other observers could still distinguish among them the division into families. According to Radloff there were five of these Djulayr, Telāu (this name is still borne by a village inhabited by the Kurama), Tama, Djagalbayli and Tarakli. This division is now quite lost; where traces of it still exist, marriages between members of one family are no longer—as among the Ḳazaḳ—considered illegal. The fact that the Kurama are a mixed people can still be recognised; besides the mixture of different stocks among them there has been, according to Zarubin, a mixture of different social ranks. The Kurama themselves do not use this name, although they do with the addition of another ethnic (Kirgiz-Kurama, Sart-Kurama). The number of the Kurama in the district of Tashkent (formerly Kurama) was in 1917 52,335; in 1920 49,697. There were further some 9,330 Kurama in the district of Khodjand. The word with the meaning of "mixed people" is also found in the area where Turkoman languages are spoken, but these Kurama have no connection with those on the Angren.

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AL-ḲUR'ĀN (A.), the Muslim scripture, containing the revelations recited by Muḥammad and preserved in a fixed, written form.

OUTLINE OF THE ARTICLE

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1. ETYMOLOGY AND SYNONYMS

a. Derivation and Ḳur'ānic usage. The earliest attested usage of the term *ḳur'ān* is in the Ḳur'ān itself, where it occurs about 70 times with a variety of meanings. Most Western scholars have now accepted the view developed by F. Schwally (*Gesch. des Qor.*, I, 53 f.) and others that *ḳur'ān* is derived from the Syriac *ḳeryānā*, "scripture reading, lesson", as used in Christian liturgy (see for example the 6th century Syriac mss., Brit. Museum, Add. 14, 432, e.g. *ḳeryānā d-ydōm bᵉʿasūtā*, "lection for the Day of Supplications", fol. 43b). See also J. Wellhausen, *ZDMG*, lxvii (1913), 634; J. Horovitz, *Isl.*, xiii (1923), 67; *Foreign vocab.*, 235 f.; Bell-Watt, 136 f. (for works abbreviated in this article, see *Bibl.*). The majority view among Muslim authorities has been that *ḳur'ān* is simply the verbal noun from *ḳara'a*, "he read" or "he recited". Both views find some support in the Ḳur'ān, where the verb *ḳara'a* does occur, but not as frequently as the usual term for reading or reciting, *talā*. In early Kūfic manuscripts we find *ḳurān* without the *hamza*, causing some authorities such as Ḳatāda and Abū ʿUbayda to derive it from *ḳarana*, "he put together" or "he bound together" (see *Gesch. des Qor.*, I, 31 f.). Against this view it should be noted that the omission of the *hamza* was a characteristic of Meccan speech and early Kūfic Ḳur'ānic script, and that the term *ḳur'ān* is closely related to the verb *ḳara'a* in Ḳur'ānic usage. The soundest conclusion seems to be that the term *ḳur'ān* originated in the Ḳur'ān itself to represent the Syriac *ḳeryānā*, but was based on an Arabic *maṣdar* form (*fuʿlān*) from *ḳara'a*.

The verb *ḳara'a* occurs in the Ḳur'ān 17 times, usually meaning "recite", but occasionally "read (aloud?)". Where it clearly means "recite", it is always the Ḳur'ān that is recited, usually by Muḥammad (XVI, 98, XVII, 45, 106, etc.). But in one of the earliest contexts it is God who recited the revelation to Muḥammad: "When we recite it, follow its recitation" (LXXV, 18), and in one of the latest contexts (LXXIII, 20) it is the believers (see below). *Ḳara'a* means "read" in four or five verses, always with "book" (*kitāb*). In XVII, 93, Muḥammad is challenged by some unbelievers to ascend to heaven and bring down a book they can read for themselves. Three passages (XVII, 14, 72, and LXIX, 19) refer to the record books to be read at the Last Judgment, and one (X, 94) refers to some of Muḥammad's contemporaries—probably Jews and Christians—as "those who have been reciting [or reading] the Book" before him. Rudi Paret (*Übersetzung, ad loc.*) is no doubt correct in seeing in the Ḳur'ān different nuances in the meaning of *ḳara'a*, which he translates as *lesen, vorlesen, rezitieren*, and *vortragen*. But there may not be as much variation in the Ḳur'ānic usage of this verb as these terms suggest, since where it

means "recite" it could be interpreted "recite [the Ḳur'ān] from written notes", and where it means "read" it could be interpreted "read aloud".

Most occurrences of the term *ḳur'ān* in the Muslim scripture date from a period of about ten years beginning when Muḥammad began to perform the *ṣalāt* publicly and ending around the time of the battle of Badr in 624. It is impossible to date the contexts precisely or determine their exact chronological order, but the general development of the Ḳur'ānic usage of *ḳur'ān* is fairly clear. (Unless otherwise indicated, all statements on dating in this article are the present writer's own conclusions. In most cases these analyses tend to support the conclusions reached by Richard Bell, who also dated individual pericopes rather than entire *sūras*—see section 5 below.)

(1) Among the earliest meanings of *ḳur'ān* is "act of reciting", seen in two passages where God addresses Muḥammad: "Ours is it to put it together and [Ours is] its *ḳur'ān*. When We recite it follow its *ḳur'ān*" (LXXV, 17 f.), and "Observe the *ṣalāt* at the sinking of the sun until the darkening of the night, and [observe] the *ḳur'ān* at the dawn; surely the *ḳur'ān* at the dawn is well attested" (XVII, 78). This last verse provides useful insight into the relationship between the *ṣalāt* and the *ḳur'ān* at the time when both were just being instituted. (2) In some verses *ḳur'ān* means "an individual passage recited [by Muḥammad]". In LXXII, 1 f. the Prophet is informed that "a number of the jinn listened, and said: 'Verily, we have heard a *ḳur'ān*, a wonder, which guides to rectitude, so we have believed in it'." See also X, 61, XIII, 31, and cf. X, 15. (3) In a large majority of contexts, dating mostly from the late Meccan and very early Medinan years, *ḳur'ān*, usually with the definite article, has a complex meaning involving several elements. It is the "revelation" (*tanzīl*) sent down by God upon Muḥammad (XX, 2 *ff.*, LXXVI, 23, etc.). It is sent down at intervals (XVII, 106, XXV, 32), and in some contexts it appears to be something in God's possession that is larger than what has so far been "sent down": "What We send down of *al-ḳur'ān* is a healing and mercy to the believers" (XVII, 82). In other contexts *al-ḳur'ān* refers to a collection of revelations in Muḥammad's possession, which he is commanded to recite (XXVII, 91 f.; cf. XVI, 98, XVII, 45). Its liturgical setting is seen in a number of passages, such as VII, 204: "So when *al-ḳur'ān* is recited [by Muḥammad], listen to it and keep silent" and LXXXIV, 20 f.: "Then what ails them, that they believe not, and when *al-ḳur'ān* is recited to them they do not bow?" Specific references to other Muslims reciting parts of *al-ḳur'ān* occur only in one or two Medinan passages, such as LXXIII, 20, where the believers are told to recite during the night vigil only as much of *al-ḳur'ān* as is convenient or easy (*mā tayassar*) for them. (4) In a number of contexts that appear to be early Medinan, dating from before LXXIII, 20, the *ḳur'ān* (sometimes without the definite article) is said to be an Arabic version of "the Book" (*al-kitāb*): "By the clear Book. Behold We have made it an Arabic *ḳur'ān*" (XLIII, 2 f.; see also XII, 1 f., XLI, 2 f., and other verses quoted below). The closest the Ḳur'ān comes to using the term *al-ḳur'ān* with its present meaning as the name of the Muslim scripture is where it is mentioned with the Torah and the Gospel in IX, 111, in a construction that suggests three parallel scriptures. But it must be remembered that the revelation was not yet complete, and the final scripture was not compiled until after Muḥammad's death.

b. Synonyms in the Ḳur'ān. The meaning of the term *ḳur'ān* and the origin of the Muslim scripture cannot be understood fully without taking into consideration the Ḳur'ānic usage of several other closely related terms, especially *āya*, *kitāb*, and *sūra*, but also *dhikr*, *maṯānī*, *ḥikma*, and others. Each of these terms has its own distinct, basic meaning in the Ḳur'ān, but in some contexts their usages converge with that of *ḳur'ān*.

The basic meaning of *āya*, like the related Hebrew *ōth* and the Syriac *ātā*, is "sign", in the sense of a token of some unseen reality or truth. Its derivation is uncertain. It would most naturally come from *'-w-y*, corresponding with the Hebrew *'āwāh*, but such a root does not exist in Arabic, and the Arabic form would be difficult to explain as a borrowing from Hebrew or Syriac (see *Foreign vocab.*, 72 f.). *Āya* and its plural *āyāt* occur in the Ḳur'ān almost 400 times, most frequently in reference to natural phenomena that confirm God's power and bounty and call for gratitude from man. These are the so-called "sign-passages", discussed below in 7.b. In other contexts *āya* refers to some extraordinary event or miracle that confirms the truth of the message of a prophet. Then in late Meccan or possibly very early Medinan passages, probably in response to the continuing demands for a miracle from Muḥammad, *āya* takes on a new meaning—"revealed message". And finally in a number of Medinan passages *āya* comes to be used for the basic unit of revelation. Later Muslim scholars interpreted *āya* in these passages to mean "verse", but the Ḳur'ān gives no indication as to the length of these units of revelation, except that in some contexts they are said to be parts of the *ḳur'ān*, the *kitāb*, and possibly of a *sūra*.

Kitāb, literally "book, writing", occurring 255 times in the singular and six times in the plural (*kutub*), is among the most difficult terms in the Ḳur'ān to interpret. Only rarely does it refer to some everyday type of writing, e.g. a letter sent by Solomon to the Queen of Sheba (XXVII, 28 f.), and a document of manumission (XXIV, 33). Sometimes it refers to a record of men's deeds (XVII, 71, XVIII, 49, XXXIX, 69, etc.), events that have been prescribed (XVII, 58, XXXV, 11, etc.), or God's knowledge (VI, 59, X, 62, XI, 6, etc.). The commentators tend to interpret these passages as referring to actual celestial books, a view also adopted by most Western writers on the topic. A. Jeffery (*The Qur'ān as scripture*, in *MW*, XL [1950], 47-50) saw references to the ancient Near Eastern Record Book, Book of Decrees, and Inventory Book, while G. Widengren (*Muhammad, the apostle of God, and his ascension*, 1955, 115-22) argued that these passages referred to a single "Heavenly Book". There is no conclusive evidence in the Ḳur'ān for either view, and there are serious problems with any literal interpretation of these verses, all of which could just as well be taken as metaphorical references to God's knowledge and decrees. A similar interpretation is possible for those verses usually regarded as referring to the heavenly original of the Ḳur'ān, e.g., "Indeed it is a noble *ḳur'ān* in a treasured *kitāb* touched only by the purified" (LVI, 77-9), "Nay, it is a glorious *ḳur'ān* in a preserved tablet" (LXXXV, 21 f.), and "By the clear *kitāb*. Behold We have made it an Arabic *ḳur'ān* . . . it is in the *umm al-kitāb* with Us" (XLIII, 1-4; cf. III, 7, and XIII, 39, which are even more ambiguous). There is in fact no clear indication in these verses or anywhere in the Ḳur'ān of a heavenly original or archetype of the Muslim scripture. This concept has been read into the text by the

later commentators. By far the most frequent usage of *kitāb* in the Ḳur'ān is in reference to God's revelation to Muḥammad and to certain religious communities that existed before and during his time, especially the Jews and Christians, who are called "the people of the Book" (*ahl al-kitāb*). This complex series of ideas involving the Ḳur'ān, the Book, Muḥammad, and the People of the Book is discussed in more detail in section 2 below.

The term *sūra*, occurring in the Ḳur'ān nine times in the singular and once in the plural (*suwar*), seems to be derived from the Syriac *sūrṯā*, *sūrāṯā*, "scripture, scripture reading" (*Gesch. des Qor.*, I, 31; *Foreign vocab.*, 180-2). In the Ḳur'ān *sūra* refers to a unit of revelation and could be translated "scripture" or "revelation". Several verses mention a *sūra* being "sent down" (IX, 64, 86, 124, 127, XLVII, 20, etc.), in contexts that are similar to some Ḳur'ānic usages of *āya*, *ḳur'ān*, and *kitāb*. And Muḥammad's opponents, who are dissatisfied with what he has been reciting, are challenged to "produce a *sūra* like it" (II, 23, X, 38) or "ten *suwar* like it" (XI, 13). Cf. XXVIII, 49, where the challenge is to produce a *kitāb* from God. The Ḳur'ān gives no indication as to how long these units of revelation were. They were most likely only parts of the present *sūras*.

The Ḳur'ānic usages of *ḳur'ān*, *āya*, *kitāb*, and *sūra* converge at the following points: (1) *Ḳur'ān*, *āya*, and *sūra* are each used sometimes for the basic unit of revelation, a pericope consisting most likely of several verses (e.g. X, 61, II, 106, and X, 38, respectively), and *kitāb* may have the same meaning in XXVIII, 49, and a few other places. (2) *Ḳur'ān* (e.g. XXXIV, 31) and *kitāb* (e.g. II, 89, VI, 92, 155, VII, 2) sometimes mean "a scripture", and *sūra* may have this meaning in XXIV, 1. (3) Occasionally *ḳur'ān* and *kitāb* are used for the revelation of God as a whole, only part of which has been sent down, e.g. XVII, 82, quoted above, and XXXV, 31: "And what We have revealed to you [Muḥammad] of the *kitāb* is the truth, confirming what was before it". (4) Usually, however, there is a distinction. *Kitāb*, when referring to the revelation, usually means the "Book of God", the revelation as a whole, while *ḳur'ān* usually means that part of the revelation that has been sent down to Muḥammad, e.g. X, 37: "This *ḳur'ān* is ... a distinct setting forth of the *kitāb* in which there is no doubt" and XII, 1 f.: "These are the *āyāt* of the clear *kitāb*. Verily We have sent it down as an Arabic *ḳur'ān*".

Other technical terms used in the Ḳur'ān for the revelation being sent down to Muḥammad include the following. (1) Three nouns from the verb *dhakara*, "to remember, to mention", are used for the revelation in the sense of a reminder or warning: *taḏkhira* in LXXIII, 19, LXXVI, 29, etc.; *ḏikrā* in VI, 90, XI, 120, etc.; and *ḏikr* in the formula, "It is nothing but a *ḏikr* to the worlds", at the end of the *sūras* XXXVIII, LXVIII, LXXXI, etc., in the introductory formula to XXXVIII where it is connected with *al-ḳur'ān*, and in VII, 63, 69, etc. (2) The term *maṯānī* has puzzled Muslim commentators and given rise to several theories among Western interpreters of the Ḳur'ān. Even if it is a derivative of the Hebrew *miḏrāš* (*Koran. Untersuchungen*, 26-8) or the Syriac or Aramaic *maṯnīṯā* (*Gesch. des Qor.*, I, 114-16), the term *maṯānī* must have been influenced by the Arabic *ṯanā*, "to double, repeat"; cf. *maṯnā*, "by twos", in IV, 3, XXXIV, 46, and XXXV, 1. Thus it is probably best translated as "repetitions" (Bell, *Trans.*, 247; Blachère, *Trad.*, 190). But it refers to the revelation sent down to Muḥammad: "We have given thee seven of the *maṯānī* and the wondrous *ḳur'ān*" (XV, 87), and "God has sent down the best of accounts, in agreement with itself, *maṯānī* at which the skins of those who fear their Lord do creep" (XXXIX, 23). The commentators usually take the "seven *maṯānī*" to be the seven verses of the Fātiḥa [*q.v.*]. A more likely interpretation is that this term refers to the punishment-stories (see 6.d and 7.d below), which Bell suggested may have once formed a collection separate from the Ḳur'ān (Bell-Watt, 234 f., 243 f.). For the literature, see *Foreign vocab.*, 257 f., and Paret, *Kommentar*, 279 f. (3) *Ḥikma*, "wisdom", probably from the Aramaic *ḥeḵmā*, is used in several Medinan passages for the revelation or part of it. God sends down the *kitāb* and the *ḥikma* to Muḥammad (II, 231, IV, 113, etc.). Muḥammad recites the *āyāt*, and teaches the *kitāb* and the *ḥikma* (LXII, 2). And the *āyāt* and the *ḥikma* are recited in the Muslims' homes (XXXIII, 34). These verses should probably be interpreted in the light of IV, 105, where it is said that Muḥammad is to judge (*taḥkum*) mankind on the basis of the Book sent down to him. For the literature, see *Foreign vocab.*, 121, and Paret, *Kommentar*, 68. The term *ḳur'ān* as the name of the Muslim scripture acquired connotations of these terms and others used for the revelation "sent down" to Muḥammad; see also Bell-Watt, 145-7, and Paret, *Kommentar*, 19, on *furḳān*.

2. Muḥammad and the Ḳur'ān

The Muslim scripture and Muḥammad's prophetic experience are so closely linked that one cannot be fully understood without the other. The orthodox view of the dramatic form of the Ḳur'ān is that God is the speaker throughout, Muḥammad is the recipient, and Gabriel is the intermediary agent of revelation—regardless of who may appear to be the speaker and addressee. An analysis of the text shows that the situation is considerably more complex than this. In what appear to be the oldest parts of the Ḳur'ān, the speaker and the source of the revelation are not indicated. In some passages (XCI, 1-10, CI, CII, CIII, etc.) there is not even any indication that the message is from a deity (on this, cf. Muir, *Mohammed*, 59 ff.), and in some (LXXXI, 15-21, LXXXIV, 16-19, XCII, 14-21, etc.) Muḥammad seems to be the speaker. In the earliest passages that mention Muḥammad's God, he is not named but is spoken of in the third person, usually as "my Lord", "your Lord", etc. (LI, 1-23, LII, 1-16, LXXIV, 1-10, LXXX, 1-32, LXXXIV, 1-19, LXXXVIII, 1-22, XCVI, 1-8, etc.). From LIII, 10, LXXXI, 23, and other verses it is clear that Muḥammad had visions of God, and at least in the Meccan years it was the voice of God himself, and not some intermediary, that Muḥammad heard. In the earliest passages to indicate the source of the revelation, God is the speaker and the direct source, e.g., "We shall cast upon thee [Muḥammad] a mighty word" (LXXIII, 5) and "We shall cause thee to recite without forgetting" (LXXXVII, 6). And a number of late Meccan and early Medinan passages speak of God reciting the *āyāt*, the *ḳur'ān*, and the *kitāb* to Muḥammad (II, 252, III, 108, XLV, 6, etc.).

But during the same period a series of passages have the effect of elevating God from direct revelation. This is done in two ways: the message is said to be brought down by certain intermediaries, and it is connected in some way with "the Book" (*al-kitāb*). Both of these concepts occur in XLII, 52 ff., where it is explicitly denied that God speaks directly to Muḥammad: "It is not fitting that God should

speak to any mortal except by inspiration (*waḥy*), or from behind a veil, or by sending a messenger to inspire whatever He wills .... Thus have We inspired you [Muḥammad] with a spirit of Our bidding (*rūḥ-an min amrinā*); you did not know [before] what the Book and faith were". The role of this spirit as the agent of revelation is seen more clearly in XXVI, 192 f.: "Surely it is the revelation of the Lord of all beings, brought down by the faithful spirit (*al-rūḥ al-amīn*)" and XVI, 102: "The spirit of holiness (*rūḥ al-ḳudus*) has brought it down from your Lord in truth". Then in the fairly early Medinan passage, II, 97, the agent of revelation for the first and only time in the Ḳur'ān is said to be Gabriel. On the basis of this verse and a number of *ḥadīth* accounts, the commentators have identified the "spirit" in the earlier passages as Gabriel, and have placed Gabriel at the very beginning of Muḥammad's ministry as the agent of revelation. Also, contrary to popular belief, Gabriel is never identified in the Ḳur'ān as one of the angels, and the angels are never said to be agents of revelation (XVI, 2, comes the closest). The angels may be the speakers in a few passages such as XIX, 64 ff. and XXXVII, 161-6, just as Muḥammad or Abraham is sometimes the speaker; but there is no need to interpret the plural "we" as referring to the angels in the numerous passages that also refer to God in the third person. On the "say" passages, in which Muḥammad is sometimes the speaker, see 7.c below.

The Ḳur'ān also speaks of Muḥammad's human informants, at first in contexts involving accusations made against the Prophet by his opponents: "The unbelievers say: 'This is nothing but a fraud [Muḥammad] has devised, and others have helped him with it' ... 'Tales of the ancients he has written down; they are recited to him morning and evening'" (XXV, 4f.). Except for the element of fraud, the Ḳur'ān does not deny what is reported in this passage. The response given in XVI, 103, to a similar charge seems to concede that Muḥammad had a foreign informant: "We know very well that they are saying: 'It is only a mortal who is teaching him'. But the language of him whom they suggest is foreign, and this is clear Arabic speech". Here again the accusation is not denied; there is simply insistence that the actual wording of the Ḳur'ān did not come from the informant. Several Medinan passages give the impression that Muḥammad actively sought information from the scriptures of the Jews, since they are condemned for concealing their Book from him. Some mention written copies that were shown to Muḥammad or his followers, e.g. VI, 92: "the Book Moses brought ... you have put on parchments you show, but you hide much of it". Others such as II, 79, accuse the Jews of writing out passages of their own and then saying "This is from God". See also II, 77, 140, 174, III, 71, and V, 15. In these passages it is not difficult to see Muḥammad receiving stories and other information from various informants, including Jews and Christians, and then in moments of inspiration reworking the material into its Ḳur'ānic form. Such a view, although considered unorthodox today, is not inconsistent with some reports found in the *ḥadīth* collections and other early Muslim sources.

This raises the question of the relationship between the Ḳur'ān and the scriptures of the Jews and Christians. Meccan and very early Medinan parts of the Ḳur'ān speak of a single revelation or Book, sometimes called the Book of God (*kitāb Allāh*), and specify those to whom it had been "given" previously: the prophets (II, 213), the seed of Abraham (XXIX, 27, LVII, 25 f., etc.), the Children of Israel (XL, 53, XLV, 16), Moses (II, 53, 87, VI, 154, etc.), John the Baptist (XIX, 12) and Jesus (XIX, 30, etc.). In II, 101 and III, 23 (cf. III, 93) the *kitāb Allāh* is specifically identified with the scriptures of the *ahl al-kitāb*, "people of the Book". This expression, which occurs over thirty times (II, 105, 109, III, 64 f., IV, 123, 153, etc.—all Medinan), is often interpreted as "the people who have a scripture". But it more likely means "the people who have (previously) been given the Book of God", since it is synonymous with the Ḳur'ānic expressions *alladhīna ūtū 'l-kitāb*, "those who have been given the Book", in II, 101, 144, 145, III, 19 f., IV, 131, etc., and *alladhīna ātaynāhumu 'l-kitāb*, "those to whom We have given the Book", in II, 121, VI, 20, 114, XIII, 36, etc. The often-discussed term *ummiyyūn* (II, 78, III, 20, 75, LXII, 2) seems to be the antithesis of these three expressions, thus meaning "those who have not been given the Book previously". And this is almost certainly the sense of the singular, *ummī*, which is applied to Muḥammad in VII, 157 f. That is, instead of sending to the Arabs and the world a missionary from among those who had already been given the Book (the *ahl al-kitāb*), God chose to send a prophet, Muḥammad, from among those who previously had not been given the Book (*al-nabī al-ummī*). There is no basis in the Ḳur'ān for the traditional view that *ummī* means "illiterate" (see UMMĪ; *Gesch. des Qor.*, i, 14-17; Bell-Watt, 33 f.; and Blachère, *Introd.*, 6-12). After the so-called "break with the Jews" in Medina around the time of the battle of Badr, the Book came to be distinguished from the Torah and the Gospel (III, 48, V, 110, etc.) and identified more closely with the revelation being sent down to Muḥammad (see, e.g., the Medinan formulas, XII, 1 f., XLI, 3, XLIII, 2 f., etc.). And the expression "those who have been given the Book" became "those who have been given a portion (*naṣīb*) of the Book" (III, 23, IV, 44, 51, etc.). About the same time the plural "scriptures" (*kutub*) was introduced in two credal statements in II, 285 and IV, 136 (cf. LXVI, 12, XCVIII, 3).

In late Meccan and early Medinan passages Muḥammad is said to have been challenged to produce a book the people could read for themselves (e.g. XVII, 93), and his followers complained that they did not have a scripture like those of the Jews and Christians (VI, 155 *ff.*). The establishment of an independent, Muslim community in Medina, distinct from the *ahl al-kitāb*, was marked by the granting of a separate Islamic scripture that was to serve as a criterion (cf. *furḳān*) for confirming the truth of previous scriptures (III, 3, IV, 105, V, 48, etc.). The evidence seems to indicate that Muḥammad began to compile a written scripture some time in the early Medinan years, but that the responsibilities of leading the rapidly growing Muslim community forced him to leave the task unfinished (see Bell-Watt, 141-4). That Muḥammad participated in and directed the task of preparing a written scripture seems certain. This is to some extent supported by the *ḥadīth*, where we are told that he dictated to scribes and instructed them on how to arrange the revelations, sometimes inserting a new passage into an older one (al-Bukhārī, *Faḍā'il al-Ḳur'ān*, *bāb* 2 f., Abū Dāwūd, *Ṣalāt*, *bāb* 2, Ibn Sa'd, *iii/2*, 59). The Prophet most likely did not do the actual writing and editing himself, especially in Medina where he had scribes to perform these menial tasks (*Gesch. des Qor.*, i, 46 f.). But it is not unlikely that Muḥammad did occasionally write out the revelations himself (see e.g. XXV, 4-6, quoted in part above, and Bell-Watt, 36, on this passage). The task

of preparing the written scripture included some revision and alteration of earlier revelations (see Bell-Watt, 89-101). The Ḳur'ān itself acknowledges that changes were made in the revelation: "For whatever *āya* We abrogate or cause [you, i.e. Muḥammad] to forget, We bring [another that is] better or like it" (II, 106), and "When We substitute one *āya* for another—and God knows best what He is sending down—they say: 'You [Muḥammad] are a mere forger'" (XVI, 101). A similar verse, XXII, 52, gives another explanation for changes in the revelation: "We have never sent any messenger or prophet before you [Muḥammad], but Satan cast [something] into his thoughts when he was yearning [for a message from God]. But God abrogates what Satan casts in, and then God adjusts his *āyāt*". These verses seem to be responses to complaints or accusations about changes in the revelation. The Ḳur'ān gives three explanations: that Muḥammad sometimes forgot parts, that Satan inserted something into the revelation, and that God simply replaced some parts with others as good or better. The term *āya* in these passages came to be interpreted as "verse", but the Ḳur'ān gives no indication as to the length of these units of revelation that were withdrawn and replaced by others.

In his commentary on XXII, 52, and in his *Annales* (i, 1192 f.), al-Ṭabarī records several versions of a curious story in which Muḥammad is said to have recited the two short verses, "These are the exalted ones (*al-gharānīḳ* = cranes), Whose intercession is to be hoped for", just after LIII, 19 f., which mention the Arabian goddesses, al-Lāt, al-ʿUzzā, and Manāt (*q.vv.*). The Ḳuraysh (*q.v.*), who were in the mosque listening to Muḥammad, then prostrated with the Muslims at the *sadjda* at the end of the *sūra*, and some of Muḥammad's followers who immigrated to Abyssinia to avoid persecution returned to Mecca. But before they arrived, Gabriel informed Muḥammad that these two verses had been inserted into the revelation by Satan. God then revealed XXII, 52, to comfort Muḥammad, and then LIII, 21-7, to abrogate the two *gharānīḳ* verses. Hostility between Muḥammad and the Ḳuraysh resumed, and the immigrants had to arrange for protection before re-entering Mecca. This story of the "Satanic verses" has been accepted as historical by most Western writers who mention it, since they find it unthinkable that it could have been invented (e.g. *Gesch. des Qor.*, i, 101-3; Watt, *Mecca*, 103; A. Guillaume, *Islam*, 189 f.). Although there could be some historical basis for the story, in its present form it is certainly a later, exegetical fabrication. Sūra LIII, 1-20 and the end of the *sūra* are not a unity, as is claimed by the story; XXII, 52, is later than LIII, 21-7, and is almost certainly Medinan (see Bell, *Trans.*, 316, 322); and several details of the story—the mosque, the *sadjda*, and others not mentioned in the short summary above—do not belong to a Meccan setting. Caetani (*Annali*, i, 279-81) and J. Burton ("*Those are the high-flying cranes*", in *JSS*, xv [1970], 246-65) have argued against the historicity of the story on other grounds, Caetani on the basis of weak *isnāds*. Burton concluded that the story was invented by jurists so that XXII, 52, could serve as a Ḳur'ānic proof-text for their abrogation theories.

3. History of the Ḳur'ān after 632

The history of the text and the recitation of the Ḳur'ān after the death of Muḥammad in 632 is still far from clear. The development of the canon involved three main stages, each of which is difficult to reconstruct and date: the collection and arrangement of the text from oral and written sources, the establishment of the final consonantal text, and the process by which several readings, i.e., different ways of vocalising the text, came to be accepted as canonical or "revealed". According to the orthodox view, the Ḳur'ān was perfectly preserved in oral form from the beginning and was written down during Muḥammad's lifetime or shortly thereafter when it was "collected" and arranged for the first time by his Companions. The complete consonantal text is believed to have been established during the reign of the third caliph, ʿUthmān (644-56), and the final vocalised text in the early 4th/10th century. Most Western scholars have accepted the main points of this traditional view. But there are problems here. In addition to the usual difficulties of evaluating Muslim sources that were regulated by the science of *ḥadīth*, the task of reconstructing the history of the Ḳur'ān is further complicated by the fact that the classical literature records thousands of textual variants, which, however, are not found in any extant manuscripts known to Western scholars. Several valuable works on the history of the Ḳur'ān were written during the 4th/10th century (see below), but later Muslim scholars, with just a few exceptions, have shown little interest in the problem of reconstructing the history of the canon. The basic European works continue to be the second edition of Th. Nöldeke's *Geschichte des Qorāns*, especially Part II, *Die Sammlung des Qorāns* (1919), ed. and revised by F. Schwally, and Part III, *Die Geschichte des Korantexts* (1938), by G. Bergsträsser and O. Pretzl, and A. Jeffery's *Materials for the history of the text of the Qur'ān* (1937).

a. The "collection" of the Ḳur'ān. The most widely accepted story of the "first collection" of the Ḳur'ān places an official, written copy of the entire text in the reign of the first caliph, Abū Bakr (632-4), thus within two years of the Prophet's death. According to the dominant version of this story (al-Bukhārī, *Faḍā'il al-Ḳur'ān*, *bāb* 3; Ibn Ḥadjar, *Fatḥ al-bārī*, ix, 9), ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (*q.v.*) became concerned that so many Ḳur'ān reciters (*ḳurrā'* [*q.v.*]) had been killed at the battle of al-Yamāma. So he suggested to the caliph that a complete, written text of the Ḳur'ān be prepared so none of the revelation would be lost. Abū Bakr hesitated, saying "How dare I do something the Prophet did not do?", but ʿUmar convinced him of the need. Abū Bakr then sent for Zayd b. Thābit (*q.v.*), one of the Prophet's secretaries, and said: "You are a wise young man, and we trust you. And you used to write down the revelations for the Prophet, so go and find [all the fragments of] the Ḳur'ān and assemble it together". Zayd also hesitated, saying "How dare I do something the Prophet did not do?" But Abū Bakr convinced him of the need, and Zayd collected all the fragments of the Ḳur'ān "whether written on palm branches or thin stones or preserved in the hearts of men", and he wrote it out on "sheets" (*ṣuḥuf*) of equal size and gave them to Abū Bakr. When ʿUmar became caliph in 634 he acquired the "sheets", and on his death they passed to his daughter, Ḥafṣa, a widow of the Prophet.

This story makes several key points, either explicitly or by implication, that would be of considerable significance for our understanding of the history of the Ḳur'ān if they could be accepted: that Muḥammad did not leave a complete written text, that nothing of the Ḳur'ān was lost, that it was preserved primarily in oral form and that any written fragments were on crude materials, that the first

official recension, authorised by the first caliph, was also the first complete collection, etc. Muslim tradition came to accept this story as a historical account, and these points as facts. But there are serious problems with this account. For one thing, most of the key points in this story are contradicted by alternative accounts in the canonical *ḥadīth* collections and other early Muslim sources (see Wensinck, *Handbook*, 131; *Gesch. des Qor.*, ii, 15-18; Burton, *Collection*, 120-8). According to one *ḥadīth*, ʿUmar once asked about a verse and was told that it had been in the possession of someone who was killed at Yamāma, so he gave the command and the Ḳurʾān was collected, and "ʿUmar was the first to collect the Ḳurʾān" (*Maṣāḥif*, 10; *Itḳān*, i, 58). Other accounts say that Abū Bakr began the collection and ʿUmar completed it, or that Abū Bakr was the first to collect the Ḳurʾān on sheets (*ṣuḥuf*), while ʿUmar was the first to collect the Ḳurʾān into a single volume (*muṣḥaf*). Others say ʿUmar ordered the compilation, but died before it was completed (Ibn Saʿd, iii/1, 212). In fact, each of the first four caliphs is reported to have been the first person to collect the Ḳurʾān (*Maṣāḥif*, 10; *Itḳān*, i, 57-9). And several alternative accounts state explicitly that no official collection of the Ḳurʾān existed prior to ʿUṯmān's. Caetani (*Annali*, iii/1, 713) and Schwally (*Gesch. des Qor.*, ii, 20) have questioned the significance of the al-Yamāma battles as an occasion for an official collection of the Ḳurʾān, pointing out that very few men distinguished for their knowledge of the Ḳurʾān are mentioned in the lists of those who died there (Schwally found two). Even more significant is the fact that there is no evidence that the alleged collection under Abū Bakr was ever accepted as authoritative. Finally, this story fails to acknowledge the role of written copies of parts of the Ḳurʾān left by Muḥammad. These important documents for the history of the Ḳurʾān, alluded to in the statement that Zayd "used to write down the revelations for the Prophet", must have played a significant role in the preparation of an official text. There are thus sufficient grounds for rejecting the historicity of this story, the most likely purposes of which were to obscure Muḥammad's role in the preparation of a written Ḳurʾān, to reduce ʿUṯmān's role in establishing an official text, and to attempt to establish the priority of the ʿUṯmānic text over those of the (pre-ʿUṯmānic) Companion codices. All three purposes would be accomplished by establishing the belief that the first official collection of the Ḳurʾān was prepared during the short reign of Abū Bakr and served as the basis for ʿUṯmān's recension. See *Gesch. des Qor.*, ii, 11-27; Bell-Watt, 40-2; Blachère, *Introd.*, 27-34; also Burton, *Collection*, 117-37 (on Burton's view, see below).

The accounts of the collection of the Ḳurʾān under ʿUṯmān assert that the final consonantal text was established during the last half of his reign, or about twenty years after Muḥammad's death. According to the dominant version (al-Bukhārī, *loc. cit.*; *Maṣāḥif*, 18 f.; *Itḳān*, i, 58 f.; *Fatḥ al-bārī*, ix, 14 f.; *Gesch. des Qor.*, ii, 47-50), the occasion for the final collection of the Ḳurʾān was a dispute between Muslim forces from ʿIrāḳ and Syria over the correct way of reciting it during communal prayers while on an expedition to Armenia and Āḏharbāyḏjān. The general, Ḥuḏhayfa b. al-Yaman, reported this problem to the caliph and asked him to establish a unified text. ʿUṯmān obtained the "sheets" from Ḥafṣa and appointed a commission consisting of Zayd b. Thābit and three prominent Meccans, and instructed them to copy the sheets into several volumes following the dialect of Ḳuraysh, the main tribe of Mecca. When the task was finished ʿUṯmān kept one copy in Medina and sent others to Kūfa, Baṣra, Damascus, and, according to some accounts, Mecca (*Gesch. des Qor.*, ii, 222 f.), with an order that all other copies of the Ḳurʾān were to be destroyed. This was done everywhere except in Kūfa, where Ibn Masʿūd and his followers refused. The details differ in various versions of this story (*ibid.*, 50-4), mainly on the number and identity of the commissioners and the cities that received official copies.

This second collection story stands up to critical analysis no better than the first. Western scholars now accept the view argued by Schwally (*ibid.*, 57-62) and others that the Ḳurʾān is not in the dialect of the Ḳuraysh (see 6.a below). If this is so, one of the two main points of the story is discredited, and it is difficult to see what role the commission might have played. Schwally also showed (54-7) that those named in the various accounts are unlikely candidates for such a commission appointed by ʿUṯmān, and he gave good reasons for doubting that the caliph would have ordered all extant copies of the Ḳurʾān to be destroyed. It also seems unlikely that differences in the way the Ḳurʾān was recited during the daily prayers would have caused serious dissension among Muslim forces involved in the initial conquests. These parts of the story all hint of a later historical setting. The Ḥafṣa element seems to be simply a device for tying the two collection stories together, while establishing an authoritative chain of custody for an official text going back almost to the time of the death of the Prophet, and explaining why this official text was not generally known (see Bell-Watt, 41 f.). For several alternative accounts that give completely different reasons and circumstances for ʿUṯmān's order for an authorised text, see Burton, *Collection*, 138-59.

We thus have before us another story whose particulars cannot be accepted. But this does not mean necessarily that the story has no historical basis at all. The unanimity with which an official text is attributed to ʿUṯmān, in the face of a lack of convincing evidence to the contrary, leads most Western scholars to accept one central point of this story: that the Ḳurʾān we have today, at least in terms of the number and arrangement of the *sūras* and the basic structure of the consonantal text, goes back to the time of ʿUṯmān, under whose authority the official text was produced. This was, however, certainly not a *textus receptus ne variatur*, even in terms of its consonantal form (see below). Most Western scholars also accept one other element of the story: that Zayd played some role in establishing the ʿUṯmānic text. Just what that role might have been is difficult to say; alternative accounts give several possibilities (see Burton, *Collection*, 117-26, 141-6, 150, 165-7, etc.). Burton contends that both collection stories are completely fictitious and that Zayd's prominence in the various accounts is due solely to the fact that he had been a young secretary to the Prophet and an early Ḳurʾān specialist who happened also to be one of the latest surviving Companions, dying *ca.* 45/665 (*Collection*, 120-4, 228, etc.). Burton has raised serious doubts about the role of Zayd in establishing the official text, and he has shown that the sciences of *ḥadīth* and *fiḳh* influenced the proliferation of Ḳurʾān collection stories; but he has not demonstrated the likelihood of his main contention, that the collection stories were fabricated by later jurists to provide support for their abrogation theories by hiding the fact that the final text of the

Kur'ān was produced, not by ʿUthmān, but by the Prophet himself.

b. Variant readings and Companion codices. The ʿUthmānic text tradition was only one of several that existed during the first four centuries A.H. The general view is that ʿUthmān canonised the Medinan text tradition and that this one was most likely the closest to the original revelation. Other text traditions, attributed to several Companions of the Prophet, are said to have flourished in Kūfa, Baṣra and Syria. The sources speak sometimes of various "readings" (*ḳirāʾāt*, sing. *ḳirāʾa*), i.e. different ways of reading or reciting the text, sometimes of "codices" (*maṣāḥif*, sing. *muṣḥaf*). On the usage of these two terms, see QIRĀʾA and *Materials*, 13 *f.* A number of works on the "disagreement of the codices" (*ikhtilāf al-maṣāḥif*) are said to have been written by Muslim scholars of the first four centuries. Ibn al-Nadīm lists eleven such works (*Fihrist*, 26; tr. Dodge, 79, which is incomplete), including the *K. Ikhtilāf maṣāḥif al-Shām wa ʾl-Ḥijāz wa ʾl-ʿIrāḳ* by Ibn ʿĀmir al-Yaḥṣubī (d. 118/736), *K. Ikhtilāf maṣāḥif ahl al-Madīna wa-ahl al-Kūfa wa-ahl al-Baṣra* by al-Kisāʾī (d. 189/805), *K. Ikhtilāf ahl al-Kūfa wa ʾl-Baṣra wa ʾl-Shām fī ʾl-maṣāḥif* by Abū Zakariyā al-Farrāʾ (d. 207/822), *K. Ikhtilāf al-maṣāḥif wa-djamʿ al-ḳirāʾāt* by al-Madāʾinī (d. *ca.* 231/845), and three works each called simply *K. al-Maṣāḥif* by Ibn Abī Dāwūd (d. 316/928), Ibn al-Anbārī (d. 328/939), and Ibn Aghta al-Iṣfahānī (d. 360/970). Of these works, most of which have not survived, the last two seem to have been the most complete and the most highly regarded by later scholars. The shorter and somewhat earlier work by Ibn Abī Dāwūd, son of the famous traditionist, was edited by A. Jeffery and published with his *Materials*, which lists several thousand variants taken from over thirty "main sources" (see 27 *f.*), including the classical commentaries by al-Ṭabarī, al-Zamakhsharī, al-Bayḍāwī, and al-Rāzī, and various works on *ḳirāʾāt*, *shawādhdh*, *gharīb al-Kurʾān*, grammar, etc., including the *Maʿānī* by al-Farrāʾ (d. 207/822), the *Mukhtaṣar* by Ibn Khālawayh (d. 370/979), and the *Muḥtasab* by Ibn Djinnī (d. 392/1002) (see *Bibl.*). The comments made by al-Ṭabarī (d. 311/923) on variants (e.g. on XXIII, 106) show that the text of the Ḳurʾān was not fixed *sc. universe* in his day.

Most often mentioned in the sources are the "readings" or "codices" of Ibn Masʿūd, Ubayy, and Abū Mūsā, said to have been dominant in Kūfa, Syria and Baṣra respectively. All three codices are said to have been begun during Muḥammad's lifetime. ʿAbd Allāh b. Masʿūd (see IBN MASʿŪD) (d. *ca.* 33/653), an early convert who became a personal servant to Muḥammad and accompanied him on many major occasions, is reported to have learned some seventy *sūras* directly from the Prophet, who appointed him as one of the first teachers of Ḳurʾān recitation (Ibn Saʿd, iii/1, 107). Later he was appointed to an administrative post in Kūfa by the caliph ʿUmar, and there he became a leading authority on the Ḳurʾān and *ḥadīth*. Ibn Masʿūd is consistently reported to have refused to destroy his copy of the Ḳurʾān or stop teaching it when the ʿUthmānic recension was made official. Also, there are reports that many Muslims in Kūfa continued to follow his reading for some time after his death, thus dividing the community there. Ubayy b. Kaʿb (*q.v.*) (d. 18/639 or 29/649 or later), a Medinan Muslim who served as a secretary for the Prophet, seems to have been even more prominent as a Ḳurʾān specialist than Ibn Masʿūd during Muḥammad's lifetime. There are reports that he was responsible for retaining verbatim certain important revelations, apparently on legal matters, which from time to time the Prophet asked him to recite. Ubayy appears frequently and in a variety of roles in the various collection stories. For instance, the "sheets" of Ubayy are sometimes mentioned instead of those of Ḥafṣa, and he sometimes appears in place of Zayd, dictating the Ḳurʾān to a corps of scribes (see *Materials*, 114; Burton, *Collection*, 124 ff.). The accounts saying that when the ʿUthmānic text was made official, Ubayy destroyed his codex while Ibn Masʿūd refused to do so may be examples of historical telescoping, meaning that the people of Syria (possibly over a period of many years) gave up their distinctive reading (i.e. that of Ubayy), while the people of Kūfa refused to give up theirs (i.e. that of Ibn Masʿūd). This would explain the later dates sometimes given for Ubayy's death and the conflicting reports regarding his role in compiling the official text. Abū Mūsā ʿAbd Allāh al-Ashʿarī (*q.v.*) (d. 42/662 or later) was a Yemenite famed for his eloquent recitation of the Ḳurʾān. His codex is said to have been accepted in Baṣra, where he served as governor under ʿUmar, and there are reports that his reading continued to be remembered and studied there for some time after ʿUthmān's text was made official. According to one account, when the messenger from ʿUthmān delivered the Baṣra copy of the new standard text, Abū Mūsā said to his followers: "Whatever you find in my codex that is not in his, do not remove it; but whatever you find missing [in mine], write it in" (*Maṣāḥif*, 13). This is consistent with other reports saying Abū Mūsā's codex was large and that it contained the two extra *sūras* of Ubayy's codex (see below) and other verses not found in other codices (*Materials*, 209-11).

In addition to these three codices, two of which are discussed in more detail below, Jeffery classified as "primary" the codices attributed to twelve other Companions of the Prophet: the second and fourth caliphs, ʿUmar and ʿAlī; three of Muḥammad's widows, Ḥafṣa bint ʿUmar, ʿĀʾisha bint Abī Bakr, and Umm Salama; four whose readings seem to have been variations of the Medinan text tradition, Zayd b. Thābit, ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbbās, Anas b. Mālik, and ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Zubayr; and three others, Sālim the Client of Abū Ḥudhayfa, ʿUbayd b. ʿUmayr, and Ibn ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ. ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib (*q.v.*) (d. 40/661), cousin and son-in-law of Muḥammad, is often said to have been the first to collect the Ḳurʾān after the Prophet's death (e.g. *Fihrist*, 28; tr. Dodge, 62 *f.*). He is reported to have arranged the *sūras* in some sort of chronological order, e.g. XCVI, LXXIV, LXVIII, LXXIII, etc., and to have given up his codex to be burned when ʿUthmān's text was made official. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbbās (*q.v.*) (d. *ca.* 68/688), also a cousin of Muḥammad, later gained fame as the doyen of early Ḳurʾān exegetes. He is said to have included in his codex the two extra *sūras* of Ubayy's text (see below), and several later scholars are said to have taken their readings from him. Sālim b. Muʿḳib (d. 12/633), sometimes called Sālim b. Maʿḳil (*Gesch. des Qor.*, ii, 11, 20, etc.), one of the Ḳurʾān reciters killed in the battle of Yamāma, was one of four to whom Muḥammad is reported to have advised his followers to turn for guidance concerning the Ḳurʾān. ʿUbayd b. ʿUmayr (d. 74/693) was an early Ḳurʾān reciter in Mecca; his codex may have been the basis for the Meccan text tradition, which seems not to have been as strong as those of Kūfa, Baṣra and Damascus (or Syria). Compared with the large number of variants attributed to Ibn Masʿūd

and Ubayy, relatively few are mentioned in the literature for these other codices. Jeffery also collected variants attributed to a number of Muslims of the second generation: al-Aswad b. Yazīd, ʿAlḳama, Ḥaṭṭān, Saʿīd b. Djubayr, Ṭalḥa, ʿIkrima, Mudjāhid, ʿAṭāʾ b. Rabāḥ, al-Rabīʿ b. al-Khuthaym, al-Aʿmash, Diʿfar al-Ṣādiḳ, Ṣālih b. Kaysān, and al-Ḥārith b. Suwayd. More variants are attributed to some of these "secondary codices" than to most of the "primary" ones. In some cases, Jeffery was able to determine the primary codex from which a secondary one was derived.

Ibn Masʿūd's codex is said to have differed from the ʿUthmānic text in several important respects. The sources are fairly consistent in saying it did not contain the *Fātiḥa* and the two charms that became *sūras* I, CXIII, and CXIV of the ʿUthmānic text (see 4.a below). Variants in the *Fātiḥa* are, however, attributed to Ibn Masʿūd (*Materials*, 25), and Ibn al-Nadīm reported in 377/987 that he saw a number of Ibn Masʿūd Kurʾān manuscripts and that one that was about 200 years old included the *Fātiḥa* (*Fihrist*, 26; Dodge tr., 57 *f.*). Of the many variants attributed to Ibn Masʿūd (see *Gesch. des Qor.*, iii, 60-83; *Materials*, 25-113), some involve only different vowels with the same consonantal text, and some are purely orthographic, e.g. Ibn Masʿūd is said to have written *kulla mā* as two words rather than one in a number of places. But the vast majority of variants listed by Bergsträsser and Jeffery for Ibn Masʿūd involve differences in the consonantal text that would also show up in recitation. Of these, many may be regarded as explanatory glosses on the ʿUthmānic text; but in some cases it is the ʿUthmānic text that seems to contain an "expansion" or "improvement", sometimes apparently for theological reasons (see *Materials*, 17). Among the most questionable of the variants attributed to Ibn Masʿūd are the "Shīʿa readings", e.g. in V, 67, XXIV, 35, XXVI, 215, XXXIII, 25, 33, 56, XLII, 23, XLVII, 29, LVI, 10, LIX, 7, LX, 3, LXXV, 17-19 (see *ibid.*, 40, 65, 68, etc.). More difficult to evaluate are the numerous "synonym variants", as for example the following found in Sūra XXV, where, instead of the ʿUthmānic terms given in parentheses, Ibn Masʿūd is reported to have read *djaʿala*, "makes, brings about", in verse 48: "and He it is Who sends (*arsala*) the winds"; *li-nunḥiya*, "give life", in 49: "that We may give life (*li-yuḥyiya*) thereby to a dead land"; *ḳuṣūr*, "castles", in 61: "Blessed is He Who has placed in the heavens constellations (*burūdj*)"; *yatafakkara*, "ponder, consider", in 62: "for him who desires to remember (*yaddhdhakkara*)"; and *al-djanna*, "the Garden, Paradise", in 75: "They will be awarded the high place (*al-ghurfa*) inasmuch as they were steadfast". Just as frequent are cases where an entire phrase is different, e.g. Ibn Masʿūd's reading in III, 39: "Then Gabriel called to him, 'O Zachariah' ", instead of the ʿUthmānic reading, "Then the angels called to him as he stood praying in the sanctuary". Some variants may have significance for the early history of Islam or the history of the Kurʾān, e.g. Ibn Masʿūd's well-known reading *al-ḥanīfiyya*, "the way of the Ḥanīfs" [*q.v.*] instead of *al-islām* in III, 19: "Behold, the [true] religion (*dīn*) of God is Islam", and the fact that he is said to have included the *basmala* at the beginning of Sūra IX (see 4.c below). Also, the order of the *sūras* in Ibn Masʿūd's codex is said to have differed considerably from that of the ʿUthmānic text. Two slightly different, incomplete lists are recorded, the earlier one by Ibn al-Nadīm (*Fihrist*, 26; Dodge tr., 53-7) and a later one by al-Suyūṭī (*Itḳān*, I, 64). The missing *sūras* in each list are included in the other, and it is possible to reconstruct a single list. The principle of arranging the *sūras* in order of descending length is followed more closely than in the ʿUthmānic text, but there is still considerable variation from this criterion (see Bauer, *Anordnung der Suren*, Table IV). Following the assumption that the longer *sūras* were not put together until the ʿUthmānic text was compiled, some scholars have concluded that the Ibn Masʿūd lists are "post-ʿUthmānic" and have little validity (e.g. *Materials*, 23 f.). But if most of the *sūras* were written down and put into approximately their final form during Muḥammad's lifetime, then there would be no strong reason for rejecting the validity of these reports outright.

Ubayy's codex seems according to the extant evidence to have been less important than Ibn Masʿūd's. It appears not to have been the source of any secondary codices, and very few unique variants are attributed to it. Most variants attributed to Ubayy are attributed also to either Ibn Masʿūd or Ibn ʿAbbās. Probably the best known feature of Ubayy's codex is that it is said to have included two short *sūras* not in the ʿUthmānic and Ibn Masʿūd texts, Sūrat al-Khalʿ, with three verses, and Sūrat al-Ḥafd, with six (see *Materials*, 180 *f.*). The order of *sūras* in Ubayy's codex is said to have differed from that of ʿUthmān's and Ibn Masʿūd's, and again we have two slightly different lists (*Fihrist*, 27; Dodge tr., 58-61; and *Itḳān*, i, 64). These lists are, however, less complete and less reliable than those given for Ibn Masʿūd, and some *sūras* are difficult to identify. Dodge (60) is probably correct in identifying *al-nabaʾ* as Sūra LXVI, and Jeffery (*Materials*, 115) is no doubt mistaken in saying it is Sūra LXV. But Dodge is certainly wrong in reading *al-dīn* (one of the titles for Sūra CVII—see Paret, *Kommentar*, 534) as *al-fīl* (the title of Sūra XCV), and in failing to recognize Ubayy's two famous extra *sūras* mentioned above. Ibn al-Nadīm states at the end of his list in the *Fihrist* that Ubayy's codex contained 116 *sūras*, and he reports that his source of information, al-Faḍl b. Shādhān, saw a copy of an Ubayy codex in a village near Baṣra in the middle of the 3rd century A.H.

Western scholarship has not reached a consensus on what value this mass of allegedly pre-ʿUthmānic variants has for our knowledge of the history of the Kurʾān. Confidence in the variants declined during the 1930s as they were being collected and analysed. Bergsträsser (*Gesch. des Qor.*, ii, 77-83, 92-6) still gave a fairly positive appraisal, but Jeffery (*Materials*, 16) wrote: "With the increase of material one feels less inclined to venture on such a judgment of value", a view that came to be shared by O. Pretzl. Then after the project to prepare a critical edition of the Kurʾān came to a halt, A. Fischer (*Isl.*, xxviii [1948], 5) concluded that most of the allegedly pre-ʿUthmānic variants were later attempts by philologers to amend the ʿUthmānic text. Recently J. Burton (*Collection*, 199-212, etc.) and J. Wansbrough (*Quranic studies*, 44-6, 202-7, etc.) have concluded that, not just some, but all of the accounts about Companion codices, metropolitan codices, and individual variants were fabricated by later Muslim jurists and philologers; but they reach opposite conclusions on the reason for this hoax. Burton argues that the Companion codices were invented in order to provide a setting for the ʿUthmān collection story, which in turn was invented to hide the fact that Muḥammad himself had already collected and edited the final edition of the Kurʾān (211 f., 239 f.). Wansbrough, on the other

hmad, asserts that the collection stories and the accounts of the Companion codices arose in order to give ancient authority for a text that was not even compiled until the 3rd/9th century or later. He claims, without providing any convincing evidence, that the text of the Kur'ān was so fluid that the multiple accounts (e.g. of the punishment-stories) represent "variant traditions" of different metropolitan centres (Kūfa, Baṣra, Medina, etc.). Each writer has stressed a valid point, i.e., that Muḥammad played a larger role in compiling and editing the Kur'ān than is admitted by the traditional accounts (Burton), and that as late as the 3rd/9th century a consonantal *textus receptus sic variatur* still had not been achieved (Wansbrough). But both writers seem to have overstated their cases. Neither has given convincing reasons for his own hypothesis, or for the shared assertion that the Muslim accounts should be rejected altogether.

c. Establishment of the canonical text and readings. Historically, it is better to speak of the ʿUṯmānic text and the oral tradition that accompanied it as evolving gradually over a period of about three centuries. The process by which this text came to prevail over its rivals and then became the foundation for several sets of accepted or "canonical" readings is far from clear, and the issues involved are complex. They include the difficult task of reconstructing the stages in the development of Kur'ānic orthography, the relationship between the written text and the oral tradition, and the tension between a critical evaluation of the historical evidence and the orthodox views on the Kur'ān.

From the beginning there were variations in the copies of the ʿUṯmānic text. Even the official copies of the Medina standard codex (*al-imām*) sent to the main centres are said not to have been identical. Bergsträsser (*Gesch. des Qor.*, iii, 6-19) lists and discusses a number of variations in the Medina, Damascus, Baṣra, Kūfa and Mecca copies of the ʿUṯmānic text, reported in the *Muḥkam* of Abū ʿAmr al-Dānī (d. 444/1052) and in other works. E.g. the Damascus copy is said to have had *ma-bi 'l-zubur* and *wa-bi 'l-kitāb* instead of *wa 'l-zubur* and *wa 'l-kitāb* in III, 184, and *minhum* instead of *minhum* in XL, 21; and the Kūfa copy is said to have had *ʿamilat* instead of *ʿamilat-hu* in XXXVI, 35, and *aw an* (which occurs in the Egyptian standard edition) instead of *an* 'an in XL, 26. These differences are of course minor, but they do involve changes in the consonantal forms. Such variations can best be explained as resulting from carelessness on the part of the scribes or lack of concern for exact uniformity among the authorities.

Deficiencies in the Arabic script used in the earliest copies of the Kur'ān led to further differences, in the oral tradition as well as the text tradition. During the first Islamic century, Arabic was written in a so-called *scriptio defectiva* in which only the consonants were given, and in several instances the same form was used for two or more consonants, e.g. *d* and *dh*, *ḥ* and *kh*, and even very different phonemes such as *r* and *z*, and in some positions *b*, *t*, *th*, *n*, and *y*. Since no diacritical points or vowel signs were included, the vocalisation was moreover left to the reader. This meant that even when there was agreement on the consonants, some verbs could be read as active or passive, some nouns could be read with different case endings, and some forms could be read as either nouns or verbs. The lists compiled by Jeffery in his *Materials* contain many examples of canonical and non-canonical variants based on forms that are indistinguishable in the *scriptio defectiva* of early Kur'ān manuscripts. In most cases the meaning is affected very little, as for example whether *kabīr* or *kathīr* is read in II, 219 (the latter was read by Ibn Mas'ūd and two of the Seven, Ḥamza and al-Kisā'ī—see below), or *badab*, "mound", or *djadath*, "tomb", is read in XXI, 96 (the latter was read by Ibn Mas'ūd and others). In some instances the alteration of a case ending or some other slight change in the vowelling does significantly affect the meaning (see KHATT and Zwettler, *Oral tradition*, 122 ff.).

During the Umayyad period (41-132/661-750) the ʿUṯmānic text tradition became more and more diverse, and new readings arose combining elements of the ʿUṯmānic and Companion oral and text traditions, especially those of Ibn Mas'ūd and Ubayy. By early ʿAbbāsid times there was such a confusion of readings that it became impossible to distinguish ʿUṯmānic from non-ʿUṯmānic ones, or to recover with confidence the "original" ʿUṯmānic text. Some order was brought to this confusion by the establishment of a *scriptio plena*, a fully vowelled and pointed text. Muslim accounts of the introduction of this improved script are unreliable because they vary so much and are not consistent with palaeographical evidence (Blachère, *Introd.*, 78-90). A popular view is that al-Ḥadjdjādj was responsible for introducing vowel signs and dots for the consonants when he was governor of ʿIrāḳ (74-95/694-714). But Kur'ān manuscripts from the first three or four Islamic centuries show that a *scriptio plena* came to be accepted very slowly. Dots of different colours or in different positions (above, below, and beside the consonants) were used to indicate the three short vowels in some fairly early manuscripts, and in some, but not all, later ones. Strokes or dots for distinguishing consonants, as well as other signs for doubled consonants, pauses, and even the finer points of recitation, were introduced later (see KHATT, *Gesch. des Qor.*, iii, 19-57 and N. Abbott, *Rise of the North Arabic script*, 17-44; on the difficulty of dating these early manuscripts, see A. Grohmann, *The problem of dating early Qur'āns*, in *Isl.*, xxxiii [1958], 213-31).

By the early 4th/10th century the improved Arabic script was widely, although not universally, accepted by Kur'ān scholars. One result of the general use of the more precise script was that the differences in the texts became more pronounced, and this caused heated disputes as to which reading was the correct one. Another result was that it became possible for the authorities to enforce a greater measure of uniformity. The central figure in what became the most important Kur'ān reform since the time of ʿUṯmān was Abū Bakr b. Mudjāhid (d. 324/936). His aim was to restrict the number of acceptable readings, accept only those based on a fairly uniform consonantal text, renounce the attempts of some scholars to achieve absolute uniformity (something which he realised was impossible), and at least ameliorate if not bring to an end the rivalry among scholars, each of whom claimed to possess the one correct reading. With a stroke of genius he chose seven well-known Kur'ān teachers of the 2nd/8th century and declared that their readings all had divine authority, which the others lacked. He based this on the popular *ḥadīth* in which the Prophet says the Kur'ān was revealed to him in "seven *aḥruf*" (al-Bukhārī, *Faḍā'il al-Kur'ān*, *bāb* 4; Muslim, *Ṣalāt al-musāfirīn*, trads. 270-4, etc.). The meaning of this expression in the *ḥadīth* is uncertain, the term *aḥruf* being the plural of *ḥarf*, "letter" (see *Gesch. des Qor.*, i, 48-51, iii, 106 f.). Ibn Mudjāhid interpreted the ex-

pression to mean "seven readings". His view, worked out in a book called *al-Kirā'āt al-sab'a*, "The Seven Readings", came at just the right time. It was adopted by the vizier Ibn Muḳla and 'Alī b. 'Īsā [*q.vv.*] and made official in the year 322/934 when the scholar Ibn Miḳsam was forced to retract his view that the consonantal text could be read in any manner that was grammatically correct. The following year another Ḳur'ān scholar, Ibn Shanabūdh [*q.v.*], was similarly condemned and forced to renounce his view that it was permissible to use the readings of Ibn Mas'ūd and Ubayy.

Selecting several rival systems and declaring them equally authoritative was of course the same method used elsewhere by Muslims to avert endless disputes, e.g. the four Sunnī legal schools. But Ibn Mudjāhid's system of seven readings was not completely arbitrary. Strong Ḳur'ān traditions existed in Kūfa, Baṣra, Medina and Damascus; and Mecca also had its own tradition. Kūfa stood out above the others as the leading centre for Ḳur'ān studies and the seat of several rival traditions. So Ibn Mudjāhid selected one reading each for Medina, Mecca, Baṣra and Damascus—those of Nāfi' (d. 169/785), Ibn Kathīr (d. 120/737), Abū 'Amr (d. 154/770), and Ibn 'Āmir (d. 118/736), respectively—and three for Kūfa, those of 'Āṣim (d. 127/744), Ḥamza (d. 156/772), and al-Kisā'ī (d. 189/804). His attempt to limit the number of canonical readings to seven was not acceptable to all, and there was strong support for alternative readings in most of the five cities. Eventually scholars began to speak of the Ten readings, and even the Fourteen. The most widely accepted of these, the so-called "three after the seven" are the readings of Abū Dja'far (d. 130/747), Ya'kūb al-Ḥaḍramī (d. 205/820), and Khalaf (d. 229/843). Among the "four after the ten", two deserve special notice, the readings of the famous al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728) and al-A'mash (d. 148/765), of Baṣra and Kūfa respectively. For each of the Ten, two slightly different "versions" (sing. *riwāya*) came to be accepted according to scholars of a generation or two later, e.g. the "versions" of Warsh (d. 197/812) and Ḳālūn (d. 220/835) for the reading (*ḳirā'a*) of Nāfi', those of Ḥafṣ (d. 190/805) and Shu'ba (d. 194/809) for 'Āṣim, and those of Khalaf (mentioned above) and Khallād (d. 220/835) for Ḥamza. For complete lists and discussion of this development, see *Gesch. des Qor.*, iii, 289-90, and Blachère, *Introd.*, 116-35.

During the 5th/11th century the exclusive authority of the Seven began to prevail, and several works were written on them, e.g., the *K. al-Taysīr* by al-Dānī (d. 444/1053) (see *Bibl.*), which replaced Ibn Mudjāhid's work. The seven came to be followed exclusively in public readings, while the others continued to be used in Ḳur'ān commentaries and works on philology, grammar, etc. The Ḳur'ān readers (*kurrā'*), who maintained a lively tradition, continued at least a scholarly interest in the "three after the seven", and further refinements were made in all of the Ten readings. Two "ways" (*turuḳ*, sing. *ṭarīḳ*) of reciting each "version" (*riwāya*) came to be accepted, and then two more "ways" for each *ṭarīḳ*, making altogether eighty "ways" of reciting ten "readings". See Labīb as-Saīd, *The recited Koran*, Princeton 1975, including a complete list of the eighty, 127-30; on the readings, see ḲIRĀ'A, and on methods of reciting, TADJWĪD.

At the present, only two "versions" are in general use, that of Ḥafṣ *'an* 'Āṣim, which for centuries has been followed in most regions and in 1924 was given a kind of official sanction by being adopted in the Egyptian standard edition of the Ḳur'ān, and that of Warsh *'an* Nāfi', followed in parts of Africa other than Egypt. The latter was used by the Yemenite scholar al-Shawkānī (d. 1250/1834), in the manuscript of his Ḳur'ān commentary (see *Bibl.*), but in the printed edition the Ḥafṣ *'an* 'Āṣim reading was substituted. The Egyptian standard edition is now regarded as the best of the Ḳur'ān so far available, although it was based on oral tradition and late *ḳirā'āt* literature and is not always consistent with the oldest and best sources (see G. Bergsträsser, *Koranlesung in Kairo*, in *Isl.*, xx [1932], and O. Pretzl, "Anmerkungen" to *Orthographie und Punktierung des Korans*, 1932).

The history of the text of the Ḳur'ān is yet to be written. One aspect of this task is a thorough analysis of the relationship between the Seven or the Ten and all the other readings, including the Companion codices. Until such an analysis is undertaken it will not be possible to give a final evaluation of the sources. The variants found in the "four after the ten" often involve a consonantal text that differs from that of the majority among the Ten (i.e., the "'Uthmānic text"), and they sometimes have completely different words—see, e.g., the references to the readings of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and al-A'mash in *Materials*, especially in the listings for Ibn Mas'ūd and Ubayy. A rough survey of Jeffery's lists shows that Ibn Mas'ūd's variants agree fairly frequently with those of two of the Seven from Kūfa, Ḥamza and al-Kisā'ī, as is to be expected, and even more frequently with those of al-Ḥasan and al-A'mash (the latter was also a Kūfan reader). Ubayy's variants agree fairly frequently with those of two others among the Seven, Ibn Kathīr and Abū 'Amr (from Mecca and Baṣra), and also with those of al-Ḥasan and al-A'mash, but somewhat surprisingly not with those of Ibn 'Āmir, the only reader from Damascus among the Fourteen. This important aspect of the history of the Ḳur'ān deserves a thorough scientific study, preferably with the use of a computer. On the question of the completeness and authenticity of the Ḳur'ān, see Bell-Watt, 50-6; for a clear statement and defence of the modern orthodox position, Labīb as-Saīd, *op. cit.*, 19-41.

4. Structure

a. The *sūras* and their names. The Ḳur'ān consists of 114 sections of widely varying length and form called *sūras*, which are divided into a number of verses (*āyāt*), ranging from three to 286 or 287. As shown above, the terms *sūra* and *āya* both occur within the text of the Ḳur'ān, but it is not certain that either has its present meaning there, i.e., refers to the present *sūras* and verses. *Sūra* is sometimes translated "chapter", but this is misleading. The first *sūra*, *al-Fātiḥa*, "The Opening" [*q.v.*], is a prayer, and the last two, known as *al-mu'awwidhatān*, "the two [*sūras*] of taking refuge", are charms or incantations. These three serve as a kind of introduction and two-part conclusion to the Ḳur'ān. Except for a few other very short *sūras* near the end (e.g. CIX, CXI, CXII), very few treat a single topic (XII, on the story of Joseph, and LXXI, on Noah, are notable exceptions) or otherwise appear to be structured entities (e.g. XXVI and LV). Most of the *sūras* consist of several segments or pericopes that are only loosely connected, often with little or no apparent connection of thought. Some short *sūras* (e.g. CIII, CVIII) seem to be isolated fragments; and it is not unlikely that some of the present *sūras* or parts of them were once joined with others. For instance,

Ubayy b. Ka'b and other early authorities are reported to have regarded CV and CVI as a single *sūra* (see *Itḳān*, I, 186 f.; *Materials*, 179. Birkeland, *The Lord guideth*, 100-30).

After the *Fātiḥa*, the *sūras* are arranged roughly in order of descending length, beginning with "The Cow" (II), with over 700 lines (60 pages) in a modern printed copy of the Egyptian standard edition, and ending with several *sūras* with just two or three lines. Actually, the *sūra* called "Abundance" (CVIII), mentioned above as a possible fragment, has the distinction of being the shortest, having only ten words. The length of the *sūras* was only one of several factors affecting the arrangement of the Kur'ān. If the *sūras* were exactly in order of length, the first thirty would be II, IV, III, VII, VI, V, IX, XI, XVI, X, XII, XVII, XVIII, XXVI, XXVIII, XX, XXIV, XXXIII, XXII, VIII, XXI, XL, XXXIX, XXVII, XXIII, XXXVII, XIX, XXV XLIII, and XXXIV. Note that Sūra VIII (which is 20th in order of length) and XIII, XIV, and XV (not in this list) are much too short for their positions, while XXXIX, XL, and XLIII are too long. The explanation for these last two groups is clear. XIII, XIV, and XV begin with the "mysterious letters" *al(m)r* and were kept with the other *alr sūras*, X-XII, while XL and XLIII begin with *ḥm* and were kept with the other *ḥm sūras*, a group to which XXXIX also belongs (see 4.d below). Other factors that influenced the order of the *sūras* include their dates, main topics, and introductions. For instance, LVII-LXVI are a group of Medinan *sūras* kept together in spite of varying lengths (see also their introductory formulas); X-XV, besides being *alr sūras*, all feature prophet stories and are named after prophets, except for XIII, which has *almr*, and XXXIV and XXXV begin with the same formula, as do LXV and LXVI, and several groups of *sūras* with the same mysterious letters (see below); cf. also LXXIII and LXXIV, LXXXV and LXXXVI, and others that begin with oaths. For complete lists of the *sūras* and their relative lengths see Bell-Watt, 206-12, and Bauer, *Anordnung der Suren* (see *Bibl.*).

Muslim writers normally refer to the *sūras* by their names rather than their numbers. Since the names were not established during Muḥammad's lifetime and did not come to be regarded as parts of the text, most *sūras* came to be known by more than one name. The Egyptian standard edition has had a considerable impact in establishing uniform names, and most of the alternative ones are no longer used. Notable exceptions are the continued use by Indo-Pakistani writers (and also Pickthall's translation) of the names *Banū Isrā'īl* for Sūra XVII, *al-mā'ida* for XXXV, *al-mu'min* for XL, *al-ṣāffāt* for LXXXIII, *al-mujādila* for XCIV, *al-nāzi'āt* for XCIX, and most also use *ḥā'mīm* for XLI, *al-ḥāqqa* for LXXVI, and *al-lahab* for CXI. Flügel and thus Bell and other European writers use *al-mā'ida* for XXXV, *al-mu'min* for XL, *alam nashraḥ* for XCIV, and *tabbat* for CXI. A complete list of the *sūra* names and abbreviations found most often in the literature on the Kur'ān is given in Paret, *Kommentar*, 351-9. Most of the *sūra* names do not indicate the subject-matter, as would normally be expected of a title. Instead they are taken from a key term or catchword that would identify the *sūra* for those who had them memorized, showing that the names arose within the oral rather than the written tradition.

The *sūra* names used in the Egyptian standard edition can be classified as follows: (1) Just over half of the *sūras* take their names from key words at or near the beginning of the *sūra*. The method most often used is to name the *sūra* for the first rhyme-word, i.e., the last word of the first verse. This is done in 30 *sūras*: XX**, XXIII, XXX, XXXVI**, LII*, LIV, LVI, LXIX*, LXXIII V, LXXXII LXXXVIII, LXXXIX*, XC, XCIII*, XCVII-VIII, CI*, CII, CIII*, CV-VI, CVIII-IX and CXIII XIV. In the eight marked with asterisks, the first rhyme-word is also the first word of the *sūra*, a method used in 14 other *sūras*. XXXVII, XXXVIII**, L**, LI, LIII, LV, LXVIII, LXXVII, LXXIX, LXXX, XCI-II, XCV and C. The four marked with two asterisks are named for their mysterious letters. A further 18 are named for other key words in the first or second verse: VIII, XXV, XXXV, XLI, XLVII-VIII, LIX, LXIII, LXVII, LXX-LXXII, LXXVI, LXXVIII, XCVI, XCIX, CIX and CX. (2) In about one-third of the *sūras* the name is a key term or catchword that occurs elsewhere in the *sūra*. In 16 of these this is the only occurrence of the term in the Kur'ān (given here without the definite article): Cow in II, 67-71 Table, V, 112-14; Heights, VII 46-8, Ḥijr, XV, 80, Bee, XVI, 68, Cave, XVIII, 9 ff., Poets, XXVI, 224, Ant, XXVII, 18, Spider, XXIX, 41, Luḳmān, XXXI, 12 f.; Troops, XXXIX, 71-3, Counsel, XLII, 38; Hobbling, XLV, 28; Sand-dunes, XLVI, 21, Apartments, XLIX, 4; and Mutual Fraud, LXIV, 9 (some first-word and first rhyme-word names listed above are also only occurrences). Only two of the narrative *sūras* are named for a key term in the *sūra* that designates the single theme: Joseph (XII) and Noah (LXXI). Twelve are named for a key term that designates one of several themes or stories: Family of 'Imrān (III), Women (IV), Jonah (X), Hūd (XI), Abraham (XIV), Mary (XIX), Pilgrimage (XXII), Confederates (XXXIII), Sheba (XXXIV), and three listed above—Ḥijr, Cave, and Luḳmān. Seven are named for other striking terms that occur also in other *sūras*: Cattle (VI), Thunder (XIII), Light (XXIV), Ornaments (XLIII), Smoke (XLIV), Iron (LVII) and Ranks (LXI). (3) The names of 14 *sūras* do not occur in these *sūras*, and most do not occur anywhere in the Kur'ān. Most of these names are based on verbs that do occur, usually near the beginning of the *sūra*: Night Journey (XVII), Prostration (XXXII), Disputer (LVIII), Woman Tested (LX), Congregation (LXII), Divorce* (LXV), Prohibition (LXVI), Veiling (LXXXI), Splitting (LXXXII), Reading (LXXXIV), and Expanding (XCIV). The names of the other three were chosen to indicate the function of the *sūra*, The Opening (I), or the main theme, Prophets* (XXI) and Unity (of God) (CXII). Only the two terms with asterisks occur elsewhere in the Kur'ān. On the names and abbreviations used for the *sūras*, see Paret, *Kommentar*, 345-50.

b. The verses. Like the *sūras*, the verses vary considerably in length and style. In some *sūras*, which tend to be short and early, the verses are short and often rhythmic. Sometimes there even seems to be an element of metre (LXXIV, 1-7, XCI, 1-10, cf. XCIX, CIV), but this is caused by the repetition of certain grammatical forms and not by an effort to carry through a strict metre of either syllables or stresses. These short, rhythmic verses are often also difficult to translate or interpret because of their use of rare terms, symbolism, metaphor, and other "poetic" features. Most longer *sūras*, and some short Medinan ones (e.g. LX, LXV), have longer, more prosaic verses, often with short statements or formulas attached to the ends in order to provide the rhyme. The one feature that all the verses have in

common is that they end in an irregular rhyme or assonance (discussed in 6.c below). Because of the rhyme the verses form the most natural divisions of the text, and yet we cannot be certain where some verses originally ended. Verse divisions are not indicated in the oldest manuscripts, and they vary somewhat when they are marked, possibly reflecting differences in the early oral tradition that go back to revisions made in the text during the Prophet's lifetime. There is clear evidence that the rhyme and the verse divisions were altered in some *sūras*, where passages originally in one rhyme were inserted into passages in another rhyme (see Bell-Watt, 89 ff.). But the main reason for the variation in the verse divisions is that the rhyme or assonance is usually formed by certain grammatical forms and elements that occur frequently in Arabic, and thus within many of the longer verses.

Several different systems of verse division and numbering arose within the Muslim community. In his English translation M. Pickthall followed an Indian text tradition in which VI, 73 of the Egyptian standard text is divided into two verses, so that 74-165 become 75-166, XVIII, 28 is divided so that 29-110 become 30-111, and XXXVI, 34 and 35 are combined so that 36-83 become 35-82. The editors of the 1976 Festival edition (see *Bibl.*) adopted the Egyptian verse divisions and numbering throughout. Even where the verse divisions are the same, there are variations in the numbering in various Muslim editions of the Arabic text and translations, depending on whether or not the *basmala* and the mysterious letters are counted. The Egyptian standard edition counts the *basmala* (see below) as verse 1 only in the *Fātiḥa*, and is inconsistent in counting the mysterious letters, counting them as a separate verse (verse 1) in *sūras* II, III, VII, XIX, XX, XXVI-XXVIII, XXX, XXXI, XXXII, XXXVI and XL-XLVI except that in XLII *ḥm* and *ʿsḳ* are counted as two verses. In all other cases the mysterious letters are regarded as the beginning of verse 1. Pickthall counted these letters as a separate verse in the same *sūras* as in the Egyptian edition and also in X and XXXVIII. Some Indo-Pakistani Arabic texts and translations of the Ḳur'ān, e.g., those of Pīr Sahaḥaddīn, M. Zafrulla Khan and M. G. Farīd, always count the *basmala* as verse 1.

The Arabic text of the Ḳur'ān most widely used in the West until recently is that of Gustav Flügel (1834), which does not follow any one Oriental text tradition. In an effort to establish an improved text, Flügel made many changes in the verse divisions, altering the numbering in slightly over half the *sūras*. The verse divisions and numbering are the same in the Egyptian and Flügel editions only in *sūras* XV, XLVIII-IX, LI-II, LIV, LIX-LXX, LXXIII, LXXV-VII, LXXIX, LXXXI-VIII, XC-XCVII, XCIX, C, CII-V and CVII-XIV. The Flügel text never counts the *basmala* as a verse, and never counts the mysterious letters as a separate verse, but always as the beginning of verse 1. The English translations by R. Bell and A. J. Arberry follow the Flügel numbering. The Italian translation by A. Bausani and the English by A. H. Siddiqui follow the Egyptian numbering, as does Yusuf Ali, usually but not always. The German translation by R. Paret and the French by R. Blachère give both numberings, Paret giving the Egyptian first, Blachère the Flügel first. For a complete list of the differences in these two numbering systems and a table for converting the Flügel numbers to Egyptian, see Bell-Watt, 302 f. The standard work on the various Islamic numbering systems is A. Spitaler, *Die Verszählung des Koran nach islamischer Überlieferung*, Munich 1935.

c. The *basmala*. At the beginning of each *sūra* except IX stands the *basmala*, the formula, *bismi 'llāhi 'l-raḥmāni 'l-raḥīm*, which can be interpreted or translated at least three ways: "In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate" (e.g., Bell, Arberry); "In the name of God, the compassionate Merciful [One]" (cf. Blachère); or "In the name of the merciful and compassionate God" (cf. Paret). This formula occurs one other time in the Ḳur'ān, in XXVII, 30, as the opening of Solomon's letter to the queen of Sheba. The elements of the *basmala* also occur separately. *bismi 'llāh* (without the *alif* in *bism*, as in the *basmala*) occurs once, in XI, 41, and the twin attributes, *al-raḥmān al-raḥīm*, occur together four more times, in I, 3, II, 163, XLI, 2 and LIX, 22. It may be significant that whenever these attributes appear together, including in I, 1 and XXVII, 30, *al-raḥīm* always serves as a rhymeword. *Al-raḥmān*, always with the definite article, occurs within the text 57 times altogether—i.e. counting I, 1, but not the other occurrences of the *basmala* at the head of the *sūras*. *Al-raḥīm* occurs 33 times with the definite article, and frequently without. The fact that the last two terms of the *basmala* occur together elsewhere in the Ḳur'ān following the same pattern as many other pairs of divine attributes (see 6.c below) suggests that the first of the three interpretations given above is the best (cf. Jomier, *Le nom divin "al-Raḥmān" dans le Coran* [see *Bibl.*]).

On the origin of the *basmala* and its placement at the head of the *sūras* there is difference of opinion. Some Muslims believe that this formula was part of the revelation and was included at the head of the *sūras* from the beginning. Textual evidence within the Ḳur'ān, supported by other early historical evidence, suggests that this is not the case. "Allāh" in the *basmala* is clearly the preferred name for God, and *al-raḥmān* and *al-raḥīm*, according to their Ḳur'ānic usage, are either names or epithets for God. Yet these names are conspicuously absent in earlier parts of the Ḳur'ān, where Muḥammad's Lord is referred to as *rabb*, "Lord", and the Ḳur'ānic formula that occurs during this early period is *bi 'sm rabbika*, "in the name of thy Lord", occurring in LVI, 74, 96, LXIX, 52, and XCVI, 1 (in this formula *bi 'sm* has the *alif*). Then, possibly as much as two years or even more after the beginning of Muḥammad's public ministry, the names al-Raḥmān and Allāh were introduced into the revelation. For a while the name al Raḥmān was preferred; see, e.g., XIII, 30, XXV, 60 and sixteen times in XIX. Ḳur'ānic evidence supports the testimony of early Muslim scholars who report that the Meccans refused to accept al-Raḥmān as the name of God, while they did know Allāh as a type of "High God" (see W. M. Watt, *Belief in a "High God"*, in *JSS*, xvi [1971], 35-40). The next stage in this development is seen in XVII, 110, a key verse that says Muslims may use either name, Allāh or al-Raḥmān, but the effect of this verse was to replace al-Raḥmān with Allāh as the primary or preferred name for God, as is seen in XIII, 16, XXXIV, 24 and many other verses that parallel the earlier al-Raḥmān contexts. After the revelation of XVII, 110 the term *al-raḥmān* seldom if ever occurs in the Ḳur'ān alone, and it loses its significance as a proper name for God, partly by being connected with *al-raḥīm* and the Arabic root *r-ḥ-m*. Further evidence for the conclusions stated here are given in Welch, *Allāh and other supernatural beings* (see *Bibl.*), on the foreign origin of *al-raḥmān* and its

use in Arabia as a proper name for God before and during the time of Muḥammad, see *Gesch. des Qor.*, I, 111 f.; Horovitz, *Jewish proper names*, 57-9; *Foreign vocab.*, 240 f.; and BASMALA.

The evidence seems to indicate that the *basmala* came into use as a result of this controversy over divine names, probably a short time after the revelation of XVII, 110. It is possible that the *basmala* was formed from existing Ḳur'ānic expressions, i.e. *bismi 'llāh* in XI, 41 and *al-raḥmān al-raḥīm* in what is now I, 3; but it seems much more likely that the *Fātiḥa* and all Ḳur'ānic occurrences of these twin attributes date from after XVII, 110. It also seems likely that the *basmala* was not originally part of the Fātiḥa; note that the Ḳur'ān scholars of Medina, Baṣra, and Syria did not count it as a verse in the *Fātiḥa*, and that this *sūra* without the *basmala* is often referred to as *al-ḥamd*, which may have been its original title [see BASMALA]. As soon as the *basmala* came into use, Muḥammad no doubt used it to introduce each recitation of a portion of the Ḳur'ān. Since many *sūras* contain passages from different periods (see 5.c below), Muḥammad must have recited the *basmala* before many segments that are now in the middle of the *sūras*. Only when the *sūras* reached their final, written form, in some cases after Muḥammad's death, was the *basmala* placed at the beginning of each *sūra* as we have it today.

d. The mysterious letters. At the beginning of 29 *sūras* just after the *basmala* stands a letter or group of letters called in Arabic *fawātiḥ al-suwar*, "the openers of the *sūras*", *awā'il al-suwar*, "the beginnings of the *sūras*", *al-ḥurūf al-muḳaṭṭa'a/āt*, "the disconnected letters", etc., but generally referred to in European languages as "the mysterious letters". They are recited as letters of the alphabet, and for 14 centuries they have intrigued and baffled Muslim scholars. Some saw them as abbreviations, e.g. *alr* for *al-raḥmān*, *alm* for *al-raḥīm*, *ḥm* for *al-raḥmān al-raḥīm*, *ṣ* for *ṣādi yā muḥammad*, *ys* for *yā sayyid al-mursalīn*, etc. 'Ikrima and others relate from Ibn 'Abbās the view that *alr*, *ḥm*, and *n* together stand for *al-raḥmān* (*Itḳān*, ii, 9). Others concluded that the letters are not abbreviations, but offered a variety of alternative explanations, that they are sounds meant to arouse the attention of the Prophet or to captivate his audience so they would be more attentive, mystical signs with symbolic meaning based on the numerical value of the Arabic letters, (written) signs of separation (*faṣl/faṣīl*) between the *sūras*, simply Arabic letters attesting that the revelation is in the familiar language of the people, etc. Al-Suyūṭī (*ibid.*, 10) mentions, for instance, a tradition related by Ibn Isḥāḳ on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās in which a group of Jews tell Muḥammad that the numerical value of the letters would indicate the number of years his community would last. At first they heard him recite *alm* (1 + 30 + 40 = 71), and said it would last 71 years. Then they heard *alms* (1 + 30 + 40 + 60, suggesting 131 years, then *alr* (1 + 30 + 200) or 231 years, and then *almr* or 271 years. In the end they concluded that the matter was ambiguous. Al-Suyūṭī discusses these and many other possibilities (*ibid.*, 8-13) and concludes that the *fawātiḥ* are simply mysterious letters or symbols known fully only to God. Later Muslim scholars have tended to accept this view, although the abbreviation theory has remained popular. A few modern Muslims have put forward new variations of mediaeval suggestions, e.g. Hashim Amir Ali (see *Bibl.*) argues that all of the groups of letters, not just some of them, are vocatives addressed to the Prophet, and 'Alī Nāṣīḥ al-Ṭāhir (see *Bibl.*) proposes that the numerical value of the letters represents the number of verses in the "original" (in most cases, Meccan) versions of the *sūras* or groups of *sūras* concerned. Citing the same examples as al-Suyūṭī (but not always the same values), al-Ṭāhir says, for instance, that Sūra VII, which has 205 verses and begins with *alms* (1 + 30 + 40 + 90 = 161), originally consisted of only the first 161 verses. In other cases he has to combine various groups of *sūras* in order to obtain the required number of verses. Thus, adding the 111 verses of XII and the "120 Meccan verses" of XI gives him 231, the value of the letters *alr* which occur at the beginning of these two *sūras* (and also X, XIV, and XV, which he does not mention). Sūra XIII, with *almr* (1 + 30 + 40 + 200 = 271), he argues has 40 Meccan verses which when added to the 231 of XI and XII gives the required 271. In response, it is sufficient to note that no *sūra* with the letters now has the same number of verses as the value of the letters, and in no case does al-Ṭāhir's suggested number of original or Meccan verses agree with the view given in the Egyptian standard edition, much less a critical view of the chronology of the *sūras* involved. This theory is a prime example of the way arbitrary speculation has been applied to these letters.

A number of Western scholars have taken up the challenge to explain these letters since the publication of Th. Nöldeke's *Geschichte des Qorâns* in 1860. Nöldeke suggested (215 f.) that they are the initials or monograms of the owners of the manuscripts used by Zayd when he first compiled the Ḳur'ān, e.g. *alr(z)* for al-Zubayr, *almr* for al-Mughīra and *ḥm* for 'Abd al-Raḥmān. These monograms, he said, got into the text by accident when later Muslims no longer knew their meaning. This view was widely accepted for a while in Europe and was taken up again and defended in 1901 by H. Hirschfeld (*New researches*, 141-3) who however regarded each letter as the initial of a different owner, *r[s]* for al-Zubayr, *m* for al-Mughīra, *ḥ* for Ḥuṯhayfa, etc. Hirschfeld's reason for rejecting the view that the letters went back to Muḥammad was that if they did "he must have had an important share in the arrangement of the *sūras*, and this would contradict all we know of the compilation of the Qorân" (142). But by the time Hirschfeld's book was published, Nöldeke had reversed his position, on the basis of a brief but insightful discussion on the subject by O. Loth (*Tabari's Korancommentar*, in *ZDMG*, xxxv [1881], 603 f.). According to Loth, the letters occur only in "late Meccan and early Medinan *sūras*" when Muḥammad was "drawing near to Judaism", and in some cases the beginning verses contain an allusion to the letters (i.e. "these are the signs (*āyāt*) of the Book"). He concluded that the letters are Cabalistic symbols standing for certain key words and phrases in the *sūras* before which they stand. Loth's arguments were sufficient to cause Nöldeke to abandon his earlier view and conclude that the letters are part of the revelation, having however no special meaning other than as mystical allusions to the heavenly Book (*Orientalische Skizzen*, 1892, 50 f., also stated in *Ency. Brit.*, 9th ed., xvi, 397 f.). F. Schwally, in a perceptive survey of the literature up to 1919 (*Gesch. des Qor.*, ii, 68-78), wisely rejected Loth's abbreviation suggestions as being too arbitrary (73), while commending him on his main argument (73-5). Schwally could not, however, accept Nöldeke's later view, calling it "doubtful" and insisting that the symbols are still somehow connected with the redaction of the *sūras*" (76). Leaving open the

possibility that the letters are part of the revelation, Schwally made the following important statement: "If Muḥammad was indeed the originator of the symbols, then he must also have been the editor of the ciphered *sūras*. This would indeed contradict earlier prevailing views, but would agree with our earlier statements that the Prophet relied on secretaries to whom he dictated his revelations, that already his object was to produce a special book of revelation, and that the manner in which pieces from various periods but of similar content are string together in certain *sūras* produces the impression that this editing originates from the Prophet himself" (77). Schwally was thus a harbinger of the work of Bell in the 1930s.

In the meanwhile, two more attempts were made to follow up on Loth's version of the abbreviation theory. In 1921 Hans Bauer (*Anordnung der Suren*) provided statistical evidence for Schwally's first point that the letters are connected with the redaction of the *sūras*, but failed to follow up on the second. Instead, he offered an unconvincing list of catchwords for which the letters are said to be old abbreviations. *ṣ* is for *yaṣ'ā*, "he who runs", in XXXVI, 20; *ṣ* for *ṣāffāt*, "chargers", in XXXVIII, 31; *ḥ* for *ḥarīnuhu*, "he who is at his side", in L, 23 and 27, etc. For the groups of *sūras* with the same letters he sought some "inner or outer connection among the *sūras*", and suggested that *ṭ(m)* in XXVI-VIII stood for *ṭūr sīnīn*, "Mount Sinai", and Moses, and that *alm* stood for *al-malḥāmi* (see 1.b above). Independently E. Goossens proposed a similar view in a 1923 *Isl.* article (see *Bibl.*), that the letters are abbreviations for discarded *sūra* titles: *ḥ* for *ḥur'ūn*, *n* for *al-nūn*, "the fish", or *dhu 'l-nūn*, one of Jonah's titles, etc. The *alr sūras*, now named after individual messengers, he said once formed a *sūra* group called *al-rusul*, "the messengers", and the *alm sūras* formed a similar group called *al-maṯal*, "the parable". His most innovative suggestion was that some letters are remnants of titles that were discarded or abbreviated when some *sūras* were rearranged, e.g. *ys* (XXXVI) is the remnant of *al-yās* or *al-yāsīn* (two names for Lilas in XXXVII, 123, 130), the title of an earlier *sūra* consisting of XXXVI + XXXVII, 1-182, and *ṣ* (XXXVIII) is the remnant of *al-ṣāffāt* (the first word and title of what is now XXXVII), the title of an earlier *sūra* consisting of XXXVII, 1-11 + XXXVIII. Bauer and Goossens inspired another abbreviation theory, that of Morris Seale (see *Bibl.*) who suggested that the letters served as mnemonics of the contents of the *sūras* involved. Seale accepted Bauer's Mount Sinai and Moses for *ṭ(m)* and Goossens' *al-rusul* for *alr*, but preferred *al-mawʿiẓa*, "admonition", for *alm* and *Yūnus* (Jonah) for *ys*. The diversity of these proposals and the fact that several alternative suggestions are often equally plausible demonstrate the futility of this approach, which also fails to respond to some of the textual evidence. In the end, what Schwally said of Loth's abbreviation suggestions applies also to those of Bauer, Goossens, and Seale.

James A. Bellamy in a 1973 *JAOS* article (see *Bibl.*) has proposed an abbreviation theory that attempts to avoid the arbitrariness of the others. Starting with the views recorded by the classical commentators that *alr*, *alm*, *almr*, *ḥm*, and *n* (letters that occur at the beginning of all but ten of the affected *sūras*) are abbreviations for *al-raḥmān* or *al-raḥīm* or both, Bellamy proposes that these letters stand for these terms in the *basmala*, and that all the other mysterious letters are also abbreviations for this formula. In order to accomplish this he suggests a number of emendations, so that *ṭ* and *ḥ* > *ha*, *ṣ* and *ḳ* > *m*, *y* > *h*, and *ʿ* > *as* or *s*. Thus with the change of only one letter, *ṭsm*, *ṭā*, *ḥk*, *ys*, *almṣ*, *ṣ*, and *ḥ*, become *basm*, *bas*, *bak*, *br*, *almm*, *m*, and *m*, all suitable abbreviations for the *basmala*. This leaves only *ḥmʿsḳ* and *khyʿṣ*, which with two and four changes respectively become *ḥm asm* and *bah asm*. Bellamy suggests that when the *basmala* was first introduced (in the "middle and late Meccan" *sūras*) it was abbreviated variously by the Prophet's scribes at the beginning of these 29 *sūras*, and that the later compilers, failing to recognise these abbreviations, gave them a permanent place in the text by writing the *basmala* out in full just before them. Most of Bellamy's suggested emendations are indeed plausible, but his theory as a whole is not consistent with some of the textual evidence (e.g. the letters are almost certainly not Meccan, but Medinan), does not answer some crucial questions (e.g. the relationship of the letters to their immediate contexts), and is based on several very unlikely assumptions (e.g. that a new formula was abbreviated a dozen different ways by unknown scribes in Mecca who died without revealing their meaning, that the well-known scribes in Medina knew nothing about the abbreviations, etc.).

Any solution to the puzzle of the mysterious letters must provide a reasonable theory that is consistent with all of the textual evidence, and the place to begin is the immediate contexts of the letters, which provide some important clues. The following list gives the *sūra* number, the position the *sūra* would have if all the *sūras* (except the Fātiḥa) were arranged exactly according to length (based on Bauer, *op. cit.*, Table II, see also Bell-Watt, 206-12, for the length of each *sūra*), the letters, and the opening formula or phrase:

2 (2)	*alm*	That is the Book, wherein is no doubt
3 (4)	*alm*	... He has sent down on thee the book
7 (5)	*almṣ*	A Book sent down to thee
10 (11)	*alr*	Those are the signs of the Wise Book
11 (10)	*alr*	A Book whose signs are made clear
12 (12)	*alr*	Those are the signs of the clear Book We have sent it down as an Arabic Ḳur'ān
13 (34)	*almr*	Those are the signs of the Book
14 (33)	*alr*	A Book We have sent down to thee
15 (41)	*alr*	Those are the signs of the Book and a clear Ḳur'ān
19 (29)	*khyʿṣ*	Mention of thy Lord's mercy to His servant Zechariah
20 (17)	*ṭh*	We have sent down the Ḳur'ān upon thee
26 (25)	*tsm*	Those are the signs of the clear Book
27 (25)	*ṭs*	Those are the signs of the Ḳur'ān and a clear Book
28 (16)	*tsm*	Those are the signs of the clear Book
29 (27)	*alm*	Do the people reckon that they will not be tried?
30 (36)	*alm*	The Romans have been vanquished
31 (46)	*alm*	Those are the signs of the wise Book
32 (54)	*alm*	The sending down of the Book wherein is no doubt
36 (40)	*ys*	By the wise Ḳur'ān ... the sending down of the Almighty
38 (39)	*ṣ*	By the Ḳur'ān, containing the remembrance
40 (23)	*ḥm*	The sending down of the Book is from God the Almighty
41 (37)	*ḥm*	A sending down from the Merciful, the Compassionate. A Book whose signs

	have been distinguished as an Arabic Kur'ān.
42 (33) *ḥm ʿsq*	So reveals to thee and to those before thee God, the Almighty
43 (32) *ḥm*	By the clear Book. Behold, We have made it an Arabic Kur'ān.
44 (55) *ḥm*	By the clear Book. We have sent it down in a blessed night
45 (47) *ḥm*	The sending down of the Book is from God, the Almighty
46 (42) *ḥm*	The sending down of the Book is from God, the Almighty
50 (52) *q*	By the glorious Kur'ān
68 (62) *n*	By the Pen and what they inscribe

Two points, stressed by Schwally, Bauer, Loth and others but largely disregarded by all the abbreviation theories, stand out in this list: the mysterious letters influenced the final arrangement of the Kur'ān, and they are closely related to the introductory formulas and to the Book. Groups of *sūras* with the same letters but with widely varying lengths have been kept together even though this violates the principle of arranging the *sūras* according to length. This suggests that separate collections of *sūras* with the same letters existed at the time of the compilation of the Kur'ān and that the redactors were hesitant to break them up. The most likely reason for this hesitancy is that they regarded the letters as part of the revelation, and the groups of *sūras* as going back to the Prophet. In nearly every case the letters are followed immediately by a reference to some form of the revelation, usually a distinctive revelation formula or oath that mentions the Book or the Kur'ān or both (XXIX and XXX being obvious exceptions). In III this formula occurs in verse 2, which Schwally (*Gesch. des Qor.*, ii, 75) says was probably the original beginning of the *sūra*. In XIX a Book formula, "Mention in the Book Mary (Abraham, etc.)", introduces five other accounts (verses 16, 41, 51, etc.), but what appears to be an older formula is retained at the beginning of the first (verse 2). The close connection between the mysterious letters and the Book is proved by the fact that, although many *sūras* begin with formulas or oaths, only one other *sūra* opens with the same type of revelation formula, namely, XXXIX, which belongs with the *ḥm sūras*. It begins exactly the same as three of them (XL, XLV and XLVI), it shares the same themes, and it is placed with them despite its length (see Bauer, Table II). Ubayy and others are in fact said to have read *ḥm* at the beginning of this *sūra* (*Materials*, 160). Revelation is mentioned in a few other *sūra* introductions, but they are different, e.g. XVIII and XXV begin with praise formulas (*al-ḥamdu li 'llāh* and *tabāraka*,), XCVII with a *wa-mā adrāka* formula (see 7a below) and LV mentions *al-ḳur'ān* in verse 2, but is in a completely different style. There is also some correlation between specific formulas and groups of *sūras* with the same mysterious letters, e.g. the *ḥm sūras* have the same formula, three of the *ḥm sūras* have the same formula, and four with unique letters (*ṭs*, *ṭ*, *ḥ*, and *n*) begin with oaths.

Whether or not Loth is correct in saying that several of the introductory formulas contain allusions to the mysterious letters, there is other evidence that these letters are part of the revelation and were recited as separate letters from the beginning. For one thing, most of the groups of letters when recited as letters of the alphabet introduce the rhyme of their respective *sūras*. The 17 *sūras* with groups of letters ending in *īm*, *īn*, or *ūn* (i.e. six with *alif lām mīm*, six with *ḥā' mīm*, two with *tā' sīn mīm*, and one each with *ṭā' sīn*, *yā' sīn*, and *nūn*) all have this rhyme, with one partial exception. Sūra XX, on the other hand with *ṭā' hā'*, has the *ā* rhyme (in verses 1 2a); XXXVIII, with *ṣād*, has the rhyme *āb*, *āq*, etc.; XI, with *alif lām rā'*, has *ir*, *ūr* in verses 1-5, and XIII, with *alif lām mīm rā'*, and XLII, with *ḥā' mīm*, *'ayn sīn ḳāf*, both have *īn*, *ūn* in verses 1-3, and then change to *āb*, *ār* and *il*, *ir*, respectively. The correspondence is not exact, and there are exceptions, but this close relationship between the letters and the rhyme or assonance of the *sūras* must be more than a coincidence.

Another striking fact that must be more than coincidental is that the mysterious letters represent every consonantal form in Arabic, while no form occurs for more than one letter. Thus we have *y* but no *b*, *t*, or *th*. *ḥ* but no *j* or *kh*, *r* but no *z*; *s* but no *sh*, *ṣ* but no *d*, *ṭ* but no *ẓ*; *ʿ* but no *gh*, *ḳ* but no *f* or *w*; and *h* but no *d* or *dh*. along with each of the forms that represent only one letter, *', l, m, n*, and *h* (note that in Kūfic Arabic *w* was written like *ḳ* and *f*, and *d* and *dh* were written like *h*, except that letters were not attached to the ends of *w*, *d*, and *dh*). The most reasonable explanation of the fact that these 14 letters, and no others, occur is that they were intended to represent the Arabic alphabet. If this is so, then the statements in the introductory formulas saying that the revelation was being sent down as a "clear Book" (*kitāb mubīn*) in Arabic take on new significance; other passages (XVI, 103, XXVI, 195) speak of the revelation being in "plain Arabic speech" (*lisān ʿarabī mubīn*). The fact that the literature on variant readings does not record differences in the way the 14 consonantal forms were recited seems to indicate that there was a strong oral tradition supporting the mysterious letters.

A number of questions still remain, but the evidence seems to support Loth, the later Nöldeke, Schwally, Bell, and Alan Jones (see *Bibl.*) in regarding the mysterious letters as part of the revelation. Moreover, Bell seems to have been correct in seeing the letters and the introductory formulas as part of the early Medinan revisions adapting the *sūras* for inclusion in the written scripture Muḥammad was preparing. It is not unlikely that the *sūras* with the letters are the ones Muḥammad prepared for the Book. The letters are significant for understanding the history of the text, and the chronology of the text is important for understanding the letters.

5. Chronology of the Text

The Kur'ān responds constantly and often explicitly to Muḥammad's historical situation, giving encouragement in times of persecution, answering questions from his followers and opponents, commenting on current events, etc. Major doctrines and regulations for the Muslim community, which are never stated systematically in the Kur'ān, are introduced gradually and in stages that are not always clear. There are apparent contradictions and inconsistencies in the presentation of both the beliefs and the regulations, and the latter are sometimes altered to fit new situations. Thus it is essential to know the approximate dates or historical settings of some passages, and at least the chronological order of others, if they are to be understood fully. This problem was recognised by early Muslim scholars who devoted much attention to it in the first few centuries, until a fairly rigid system of dating was established and given the imprimatur of orthodoxy. In modern times the study of the chronology of the Kur'ān has been almost exclusively a domain of

Western scholars, who have not however been able to reach a consensus on a dating system, or even on the possibility of establishing one.

a. Historical references and allusions in the Kur'ān. The Kur'ān mentions specifically or alludes to a number of historical events in the life of Muḥammad and his contemporaries, but it gives no dates or other indications as to exactly when these events occurred. In most cases, the specific occasions alluded to and the dates of the passages involved cannot be determined. This is especially true for the period before the Hidjra in 622, for which there are only a few references to dateable historical events, and even if the events could be identified with certainty this would be of little help in dating the passages that refer to them, e.g. XXX, 2-5, mentions a military defeat of the Byzantines, presumably their loss of Jerusalem to the Persians in 614 (cf. also CV, believed to refer to a military expedition against Mecca in the middle years of the 6th century). There are many allusions to Muḥammad's personal situation in Mecca (e.g. the persecution he suffered, accusations made by his opponents, his early life and orphanhood) and to specific practices of the Meccans, but the passages that contain these allusions cannot be dated with any precision. It is only in the Medinan period that we have a number of passages that can be dated fairly precisely on the basis of references or allusions to specific historical events that can be dated from other sources. For instance, the battle of Badr (spring 624) and the battle of Ḥunayn (early 630) are mentioned by name in III, 123 and IX, 25, respectively. The change of the *kibla* [q.v.] (direction one faces when performing the ritual prayer) from Jerusalem to Mecca in late 623 or early 624 is discussed in II, 142-50. The adoption of the ancient pilgrimage rituals about the time of the battle of Badr is discussed in II, 158, 198, V, 95 ff. etc. where the Ka'ba, al-Ṣafā and al-Marwa (two ancient holy places in Mecca), Mount 'Arafāt, and al-Mash'ar al-Ḥarām (the sanctuary in Muzdalifa) are all mentioned by name. Muḥammad's adopted son, Zayd (b. Ḥāritha), is mentioned by name in XXXIII, 37 in connection with an episode that occurred in the spring of 627. And many other events are alluded to, although not by name: the battle of Uḥud (625) in III, 155-74; the expulsion of the Jewish tribe of al-Nadīr (625) in LIX, 2-5; the Day of the Trench (627) in XXXIII, 9-27; the expedition to Khaybar (628) in XLVIII, 15; the expedition to Tabūk (630) in IX, 29-35, etc. All Kur'ānic dating systems, Muslim and non-Muslim, take these historical references and allusions in Medinan contexts as their starting-point.

b. Traditional Muslim dating. During the early Islamic centuries a number of passages in the Kur'ān came to be connected with stories that arose in the attempts to reconstruct the life of the Prophet, especially for the period in Mecca before the Hidjra: LIII, 2-18, and LXXX, 15-29, came to be interpreted as Muḥammad's call visions, while XCIV came to be associated with a story about the miraculous opening of his breast and purification of his heart, XCVI and LXXIV with his call to public prophethood, XVII, 1, with his Night Journey, etc. (see, e.g., al-Ṭabarī and al-Zamakhsharī, *ad loc.*; for the European literature, Paret, *Kommentar*, 460 f., 513-15, 493 and 295 f.). Other passages came to be connected with certain events in the life of the Muslim community: XIX is said to have been recited to the Negus of Abyssinia by Muḥammad's followers who were forced to emigrate from Mecca to escape persecution around 615, and a written copy of XX is said to have been involved in the conversion of 'Umar at about the same time. Early Kur'ān scholars also attempted to identify and explain vague allusions in the Kur'ān, e.g. they explained that the blind man alluded to in LXXX was a certain 'Abd Allāh b. Umm Maktūm, and that the man involved in a divorce dispute in LVIII was Aws b. al-Ṣāmit. And episodes related to IX, 40, XXIV, 11-20, XXXIII, 37-40, LXVI, 3-5, CXI, 1-5, and many others were similarly explained. From these stories and explanations there arose a separate genre of Islamic literature called *asbāb al-nuzūl* "the occasions of the revelation", the prime example being a work of the same title by al-Wāḥidī (d. 468/1075-6). This literature does not attempt to provide a complete system for dating the various parts of the Kur'ān, and only a small proportion of the text is treated. Also, there are a number of inconsistencies, e.g. whether XCVI or LXXIV was the "first revelation" (see *Itḳān*, i, 23 f.). Some of the stories and other explanations found in this literature and in the Kur'ān commentaries are obviously legendary, and in some cases the process by which these accounts came to be attached to Kur'ānic passages can be reconstructed (see, e.g., H. Birkeland, *The legend of the opening of Muḥammad's breast*, Oslo 1955, and *The Lord guideth*, Oslo 1956, 38-53). Others probably have some historical validity, but there is often good reason to suspect elaborate embellishment. These accounts—historical, semi-historical, and legendary—came to be accepted, often without discrimination, as the basis for the traditional Muslim dating of the Kur'ān.

The adoption of the Kur'ān as a primary source for Islamic law played an important role in the establishment of a chronological order for the text. Rather than attempting to explain away the inconsistencies in passages giving regulations for the Muslim community, Kur'ān scholars and jurists came to acknowledge the differences, while arguing that the latest verse on any subject "abrogated" all earlier verses that contradicted it. A classic example involves the Kur'ānic teaching or regulation on drinking wine, where V, 90, which has a strong statement against the practice, came to be interpreted as a prohibition, abrogating II, 219, and IV, 43, which appear to allow it. This theory or doctrine of abrogation (*naskh*) has only limited support in the Kur'ān itself, since the verses on which it is based, especially II, 106, involve passages that are no longer in the Kur'ān. But a number of treatises on the subject influenced the development of the traditional dating of the Kur'ān by establishing a widespread belief in the chronological order of certain groups of isolated verses. Eventually, long lists of "abrogating and abrogated (verses)" (*al-nāsikh wa 'l-mansūkh*) were drawn up, as jurists and others, in efforts to support their own views, sought out all possible inconsistencies and claimed that the "earlier" verses involved had been abrogated. See NASKH and TAFSĪR; *Itḳān*, ii, 20-7; Bell-Watt, 86-9, Burton, *Collection*, 46-104.

The task of dating parts of the Kur'ān and determining the chronological order was further complicated by the assumption that the present *sūras* were the original units of revelation, i.e. that except for a few verses in some *sūras*, each *sūra* was revealed all at once or during a short period of time before the next *sūra* was begun. This assumption led to the practice of designating each *sūra* as "Meccan" or "Medinan" (i.e. revealed before or after the Hidjra) and to attempts to determine the exact chronological order of all the *sūras* as wholes—rather than dealing with

separate parts as in the *asbāb al-nuzūl* and *al-nāsiḵ wa 'l-mansūḵ* literature. But al-Suyūṭī's lists of *sūras* attributed to Ibn ʿAbbās (*d. ca.* 68/688), Ḳatāda b. Diʿāma (d. ca. 112/730), and others show that the schools of these early Kur'ān scholars could not agree even on whether some *sūras* were "Meccan" or "Medinan", much less on their exact chronological order (*Itḳān*, i, 70 f.). Al-Bayḍāwī (d. 716/1316) classified the *sūras* as "Meccan", "Medinan", or "disputed", and included 17 in this last category: XIII, XLVII, LV, LVII, LXI, LXIV, LXXXIII, XCV, XCVII-C, CII, CVII and CXII-CXIV. The lists given by al-Suyūṭī show that there was also difference of opinion on six others: XLIX, LXII-LXIII, LXXVII, LXXXIX and XCII. The chronological order attributed to Ibn ʿAbbās (*ibid.*) came to be widely accepted, and with a few changes was adopted by the editors of the Egyptian standard edition of the Kur'ān (1322/1924), who indicated in the heading to each *sūra* the *sūra* revealed just before it and any verses that belong to a different period. Thus the heading for XIV reads: "Sūra of Abraham Meccan, except verses 28 and 29 which are Medinan it has 52 verses; it was revealed after Sūra of Noah".

The Egyptian standard edition gives the following chronological order of the *sūras*, with the verses said to date from a different period given in parentheses: XCVI, LXVIII (17-33, 48-50 Med.), LXXIII (10 *f.*, 20 Med.), LXXIV, I, CXI, LXXXI, LXXXVII, XCII, LXXXIX, XCIII, XCIV, CIII, C, CVIII, CII, CVII, CIX, CV, CXIII, CXIV, CXII, LIII, LXXX, XCVII, XCI, LXXXV, CVI, CI, LXXV, CIV, LXXVII (48 Med.), L (38 Med.), XC, LXXXVI, LIV (54-6 Med.), XXXVIII, VII (163-70 Med.), LXXII, XXXVI (45 Med.), XXV (68-70 Med.), XXXV, XIX (58, 71 Med.), XX (130 f. Med.), LVI (72 f. Med.), XXVI (197, 224-7 Med.), XXVII, XXVIII (52-5 Med., 85 during Hiǧra), XVII (26, 32 f., 57, 73-80 Med.), X (40, 94-6 Med.), XI (12, 17, 114 Med.), XII (1-3, 7 Med.), XV, VI (20, 23, 91, 114, 141, 151-3 Med.), XXXVII, XXXI (27-9 Med.), XXXIV (6 Med.), XXXIX (52-4 Med.), XL (56 f. Med.), XLI, XLII (23-5, 27 Med.), XLIII (54 Med.), XLIV, XLV (14 Med.), XLVI (10, 15, 35 Med.), LI, LXXXVIII, XVIII (28, 83-101 Med.), XVI (126-8 Med.), LXXI, XIV (28 f. Med.), XXI, XXIII, XXXII (16-20 Med.), LII, LXVII, LXX, LXXVIII, LXXIX, LXXXII, LXXXIV, XXX (17 Med.), XXIX (1-11 Med.), LXXXIII—Hiǧra—II (281 later), VIII (30-6 Mec.), III, XXXIII, LX, IV, XCIX, LVII, XLVII (13 during Hiǧra), XIII, LV, LXXVI, LXV, XCVIII, LIX, XXIV, XXII, LXIII, LVIII, XLIX, LXVI, LXIV, LXI, LXII, XLVIII, V, IX (128 f. Mec.), CX. Sūra II is the only one said to have an addition later in the same period. Sūras VIII, XLVII, and IX, all Medinan, are the only ones said to have earlier verses inserted into later *sūras*. Of the 86 Meccan *sūras*, 33 are said to have some Medinan verses. The traditional dating seen here is based on three assumptions: (1) that the present *sūras* were the original units of revelation, (2) that it is possible to determine their chronological order, and (3) that Tradition (including the *ḥadīth*, *sīra*, *asbāb al-nuzūl*, *al-nāsiḵ wa 'l-mansūḵ*, and *taʾrīḵ bi 'l-maʾāṯir* literature) provides a valid basis for dating the *sūras*.

c. Modern Western dating. Since the mid-19th century, Western scholars have been applying critical methods to the Kur'ān in varying degrees, and have proposed a variety of dating systems. The one that has gained the most acceptance is that of what might be called the Four-period School, founded by Gustav Weil in his *Historisch-kritische Einleitung in der Koran* (1844, 2878). Weil reassessed the dating of the Kur'ān and offered his own chronological order of the *sūras* using three criteria: (1) references to historical events known from other sources, (2) the character of the revelation as reflecting Muḥammad's changing situation and role, and (3) the outward appearance or form of the revelation (1st ed., 54 f.). His most notable contribution was his division of the "Meccan *sūras*" into three groups, thus establishing altogether four periods of revelation, with the dividing points at about the time of the emigration to Abyssinia (*ca.* 615), Muḥammad's return from al-Ṭāʾif (*ca.* 620), and the Hiǧra (September 622). Weil's four-period dating system and his three criteria were then adopted with some changes in the order of the *sūras*, by Th. Nöldeke in 1860 and F. Schwally in 1909 in their monumental *Gesch. des Qor.*, and then by R. Blachère in his *Introd.* (1949, 1959) and translation, *Le Coran* (1949-50, 1966). In the 1st ed. of his translation, Blachère arranged the *sūras* in what he took to be their chronological order, in the 2nd ed. the *sūras* were put in the traditional order (this 2nd ed. was meant for a wider public, but Blachère may also have felt, after deeper acquaintanceship with Bell's work, that it was not possible to arrange the *sūras* in an exact chronological order). In order to show the similarities and differences among the three versions of this four-period system, and to facilitate a comparison of this system with the traditional dating, the three European versions are all given below. The few verses in some *sūras* that are said to date from a different period are not indicated here, except where Blachère divided two *sūras* in the first edition of his translation.

The *sūras* of the First or Early Meccan Period tend to be short, with short, rhythmic verses. They often begin with a series of *Ḥāʾ-Mīm*-style oaths, and the language is said to be full of "poetic imagery and power". Assuming a progressive deterioration of style, Weil placed in the First Period the *sūras* he felt have the most exalted poetic style, along with others that share the same themes and general style. The chronological order of the *sūras* of the First Period according to the three versions is as follows: Weil: 96, 74, 73, 106, 111, 53, 81, 68, 87, 92, 89, 93, 94, 103, 100, 108, 102, 107, 109, 105, 113, 114, 112, 80, 97, 91, 85, 90, 95, 101, 75, 104, 77, 86, 70, 78, 79, 82, 84, 56, 88, 52, 69, 83, 99.
Nöldeke: 96, 74, 111, 106, 108, 104, 107, 102, 105, 92, 90, 94, 93, 97, 86, 91, 80, 68, 87, 95, 103, 85, 73, 101, 99, 82, 81, 53, 84, 100, 79, 77, 78, 88, 89, 75, 83, 69, 51, 52, 56, 70, 55, 112, 109, 113, 114, 1. Blachère: 96^{1-5}, 74^{1-7}, 106, 93, 94, 103, 91, 107, 86, 95, 99, 101, 100, 92, 82, 87, 80, 81, 84, 79, 88, 52, 56, 69, 77, 78, 73, 55, 97, 53, 102, 96^{6-20}, 70, 73, 78, 83, 74^{7-56}, 111, 108, 104, 90, 105, 89, 112, 109, 1, 113, 114.

The *sūras* of the Second or Middle Meccan Period are longer and "more prosaic", but still with "poetic" qualities. In style they are said to form a transition between the *sūras* of the First and Third periods. The signs of God in nature and the divine attributes such as mercy (*raḥma*) are emphasized, and God is often called the Merciful One (*al-raḥmān*). There are vivid descriptions of paradise and the hellfire, and here too the punishment-stories are introduced. The *sūras* of the Second Period are (italics = Nöldeke only; parentheses = Blachère only): Weil: 1, 52, 36, 50, 54, 44, 19, 20, 26, 23, 25, 26, 67, 37, 38, 43, 72, 55, 15, 76.

Nöldeke and Blachère: (51), 34, (68), 37, 71, 76, 44, 50, 20, 26, 15, 19, 38, 36, 43, 72, 67, 23, 21, 25, 17, 27, 18.

The *sūras* of the Third or Late Meccan Period are even longer and "more prosaic", and Weil says the "poetic power" has been lost altogether. The revelation often takes the form of sermons or speeches, and the prophet stories and punishment-stories are retold in more and more detail. Nöldeke emphasises changes in vocabulary, but similarity of form, in Late Meccan and Medinan *sūras*. The *sūras* of the Third Period are

Weil 7, 72, 35, 27, 28, 17, 10, 11, 12, 6, 31, 34, 39, 40, 32, 42, 45, 46, 18, 16, 14, 41, 30, 29, 13, 64.

Nöldeke and Blachère. 32, 41, 45, (17), 16, 30, 11, 14, 12, 40, 28, 39, 29, 31, 42, 10, 34, 35, 7, 46, 6, 13.

The Medinan *sūras* and their chronological order are determined by the subject matter of these revelations that reflect Muḥammad's growing political power and the general development of events in Medina after the Hidjra. New themes and key terms are said to help distinguish these *sūras* from certain Late Meccan ones. The Medinan *sūras* are

Weil 2, 98, 62, 63, 22, 4, 8, 47, 57, 3, 59, 24, 63, 33, 48, 110, 61, 60, 58, 49, 66, 9, 5.

Nöldeke and Blachère. 2, 98, 64, 62, 8, 47, 3, 61, 57, 4, 65, 59, 33, 63, 24, 58, 22, 48, 66, 60, 110, 49, 9, 5.

Here we see a combination of excessive dependence on traditional Muslim dating and on matters of form and style, e.g. in Weil's First Period the first 34 *sūras*, with just a few exceptions, are in almost exactly the same order as in the traditional Muslim dating (cf. the Egyptian list above). Weil then closed this period with eleven *sūras* that have the same "poetic style", but are dated considerably later by Muslims (note the exact order of LXX-LXXXIV). Nöldeke then accepted all of Weil's First Period *sūras*, and added three more (I, LI, LV), and Blachère accepted all of Nöldeke's except for two (LI, LXVIII), and added one (LXXVI)—these differences involve mainly the dividing points between the periods. Also, the traditional stories involving certain *sūras*—Muḥammad's call (XCVI, LXXIV), an incident involving Muḥammad's uncle, ʿAbd al-ʿUzzā (CXI, the emigration to Abyssinia (XIX, XX), etc.—seem to have been accepted as historical. But the Tradition, especially on the Meccan period, is not this trustworthy. Weil, Nöldeke, and Blachère have accepted the three assumptions of the traditional Muslim dating stated above; their four-period system is essentially little more than a European variation of the traditional dating. On the question of style, it is true that there were changes through the years but there is no reason to assume that all *sūras* with the same style belong to the same period. The Four-period School have not demonstrated the validity of the historical framework or the development of ideas and key terms assumed by their system, which has been widely accepted in the West with much more confidence than is justified. It should be emphasised, however, that this system is often used by others in a rigid way not intended by its founders (Weil and Nöldeke), e.g. giving the exact chronological order of several verses, or the exact number of occurrences of a term in each period. Schwally in particular emphasised that the order proposed by Nöldeke was only approximate.

Three other dating systems were proposed by Europeans within a span of ten years around the turn of the 20th century. That of H. Grimme, presented in his *Mohammed* (1892-5), ii, 25 ff., was basically a variation of Nöldeke's, with more emphasis on stages in the development of doctrinal themes. Grimme's analysis of groups of ideas that occur together in the Kur'ān was useful, but his view of the overall sequence of ideas (monotheism, resurrection, the Last Day, etc.) was not widely accepted, and has since been discredited. Sir William Muir, in his *The Coran, its composition and teaching* (1896), 43-7, offered an arrangement of the *sūras* in six periods (five Meccan and one Medinan). His most significant and innovative suggestion was that the first period in the composition of the Kur'ān comprised eighteen short *sūras*, which he called "rhapsodies", dating from before Muḥammad's call: CIII, C, XCIX, XCI, CVI, I, CI, XCV, CII, CIV, LXXXII, XCII, CV, LXXXIX, XC, XCIII, XCIV and CVIII. Muir pointed out that none of these is in the form of a message from a deity. His second period has four *sūras* (XCVI, CXIII, LXXIV, CXI) treating "the opening of Muḥammad's ministry", presumably ca. 610. The other dividing points are the beginning of Muḥammad's public ministry (ca. 613), the Abyssinian emigration (ca. 615), the Year of Sorrow (ca. 619), and the Hidjra. Muir is no doubt correct in dating some *sūras* before XCVI and LXXIV, but I and others he lists are almost certainly later. In general, the criticisms stated above of the four-period system apply also to Muir's. In 1902 H. Hirschfeld, in his *New researches* (see *Bibl.*), proposed a chronological arrangement of the Kur'ān based on the character or function of individual passages. After the "first proclamation", XCVI, 1-5, Hirschfeld's arrangement also has six periods, in which the revelations are classified as "confirmatory" (LXXXVII, LXVIII, 1-33, XCII, LXIX, 40-52, etc.), "declamatory" (LXXXI, LXXXII, LXXXIV, etc.), "narrative" (LXVIII, 34-52, LI, XXVI, 1-220, LV, etc.), "descriptive" (LXXIX, 27-46, LXXI, LV, etc.), "legislative" (VI, 1-73, XCIII, 9-11, XXV, 63-72, etc.), and Medinan, grouped together but discussed separately as those up to the battle of Badr, political speeches, revelations on Muḥammad's domestic affairs, and preparations for the Pilgrimage to Mecca. This system has a number of obvious flaws, but Hirschfeld's work was valuable for its preliminary analysis of Kur'ānic literary types and its recognition of the fact that in dating parts of the Kur'ān we must deal with individual pericopes rather than entire *sūras*.

This insight became a guiding principle in the most elaborate attempt so far to identify and date the original units of revelation, Richard Bell's *The Qur'ān, translated, with a critical re-arrangement of the surahs*, 2 vols. (1937-9). Over a decade earlier he became convinced that Nöldeke's dating was inadequate (*ibid.*, 689 f.). Bell's verse-by-verse analysis of the entire Kur'ān led him to conclude that the *sūras* are far more complex than is assumed by the traditional Muslim and European dating, that the revelations underwent considerable revision, including expansion, replacement of older passages with new material, changes in the rhyme, etc., that this revision involved written documents and was done during Muḥammad's lifetime under his supervision, and that the material for most of the *sūras* was compiled, but not put into its final form, under Muḥammad's supervision. Bell did not present a rigid dating system, but concluded "provisionally" (vii f.) that the composition of the Kur'ān fell into three main periods: an early one from which only some sign passages and exhortations to worship God survive, a "Kur'ān period", covering the latter part of the Meccan period and the first year or two in

Medina, during which Muḥammad's task was to produce a *ḳur'ān*, a collection of lessons for liturgical use; and a "Book period", beginning about the end of the year 2 A.H., during which Muḥammad began to produce a written scripture. According to Bell, the present Kur'ān is not to be divided into these three periods, since a number of sign-passages were incorporated into the liturgies. *Ḳur'ān*, and in Medina this collection of oral materials was revised to form part of the Book. Bell attempted to date some Medinan passages fairly precisely—"early Medinan, revised after Badr", "shortly after Uḥud", "year VII", etc. But for most passages he gave very general and often tentative suggestions, especially for the Meccan material, e.g. "early, revised in Mecca (?), "Meccan, with Medinan additions", and very often "Meccan" and "late Meccan or early Medinan". A survey of Bell's provisional dating of the individual passages shows that he regarded fewer than twenty *sūras* as being probably completely Meccan: L, LIII, LV, LXIX, LXXV, LXXIX, LXXX, LXXXII, LXXXVI, LXXXVIII-LXXXIX, XCI-XCIII, XCV-XCVI, XCIX, CIV and CXIII, all of which are said to have material from different dates. Of the other short *sūras*, some of which he regarded as possible unities, Bell said CII, CV, CXII and CXIV seem to be Medinan; I, XCIV, CIII and CVI-CVIII could be either Meccan or Medinan, and on C, CI, CIX and CXI he gave no opinion. He regarded as completely Medinan the same 24 *sūras* said to be Medinan by Nöldeke, but saw them as having significant amounts of material from several different dates, thus making it impossible to put the *sūras* as wholes in chronological order. This leaves exactly half of the *sūras* (57) which Bell regarded as having significant amounts of material from both before and after the Hijra: 33 said to be mostly Meccan, with Medinan revisions and additions—VI, VII, XII, XIII, XV, XVII, XVIII, XXI, XXV-XXVI, XXXIV, XXXVI-XXXVIII, XLI, XLIV, LI-LII, LIV, LVI, LXVIII, LXX-LXXIV, LXXVI-LXXVIII, LXXXI, LXXXIV, LXXXVII and XC; and 24 said to be mostly Medinan, with some Meccan passages, or based on Meccan material—X, XI, XIV, XVI, XIX, XX, XXIII, XXVII-XXXII, XXXV, XXXIX, XL, XLII-XLIII, XLV-XLVI, LXVII, LXXXIII, LXXXV and XCVII. He thus distinguished between dates of original revelation (or earliest recitation) and dates of later editing and composition during Muḥammad's lifetime. The fact that he indicated breaks in the text and identified older components, e.g. Meccan passages in *sūras* that were completed in Medina, does not mean he failed to recognise that some longer *sūras* (e.g. XII, XIX, XXVI) and many shorter ones (e.g. LXXXVII, CIV) are carefully composed, unified works in their final form.

Bell's analysis of the Kur'ān has often been misunderstood or ignored by later writers, partly because the extensive notes to his translation, giving the arguments for his reconstructions, were never published. Nor has any thorough study and critique of Bell's work yet appeared. The review articles by J. E. Merill and W. M. Watt (see *Bibl.*) and Watt's remarks in Bell-Watt (213 f., 101-7, 237-41, etc.) are useful introductions. Watt has expressed reservations about Bell's hypothesis on the disjointedness of the Kur'ān. Bell suggested that when some passages were being revised Muḥammad instructed the scribes to write the new versions on the backs of the sheets on which the verses being replaced were written, and that the later editors, not wanting to discard any of the revelation, inserted the old verses just before or after the new ones. E.g. II, 185, was written on the back of 184, 186 (on fasting), II, 196, on the back of 197-9 (on the Pilgrimage), XXIV, 2-9, on the back of 10-18 (on fornication), and XVIII, 6-9 (a new introduction to the story of the Seven Sleepers), on the back of 10-12, which was replaced by a longer version of the story in 13-22a. In other cases the scribes simply used the backs of sheets on which older, discarded material was written, e.g. IV, 21-24, on the back of 2-10; IV, 19-21, on the back of 25-28, and VII, 3-5, on the back of 6-9. This hypothesis provides a feasible explanation and solution to textual problems in some cases, but not in others. It now seems that Bell was sometimes too quick to designate a passage as "discarded" material or a "scrap" that got into the Kur'ān by mistake; and he seems to have failed to recognise some literary forms, e.g. the *wa-mā adrāka* formula (see 7.2 below). But it must be remembered that Bell was a pioneer in this field, and that he attempted to locate all possible breaks in the text, acknowledging that many of his suggestions were uncertain or tentative and that some would be proved untenable by later research. On the whole, his dating and reconstructions have been supported by later studies, e.g. K. Wagtendonk, *Fasting in the Koran* (Leiden 1968), 47-81 on II, 183 ff., see also Welch, *Allāh and other supernatural beings* (see *Bibl.*) on the emergence of the doctrine of *tawḥīd*, and idem, in W. M. Watt and A. T. Welch, *Der Islam*, i (Stuttgart 1980), 264-72, 300-3, on the origin and early development of the *ṣalāt* and *zakāt*. Careful studies of a number of passages and topics are needed before a final judgment of Bell's work can be made.

There is room for disagreement on specifics, but there can now be little doubt that Schwally was correct in concluding that passages from different dates were put together to form the present *sūras*, that written documents were involved, and that this revision was done under Muḥammad's supervision (*Gesch. des Qor.*, I, 45 ff., II, 1 f., 77, etc.). Furthermore, Bell seems to have been right in his main conclusions, which went beyond Schwally's position. Most *sūras* have significant amounts of material from different dates, and nearly all of the longer *sūras* with Meccan material were revised or expanded in Medina, so that we can no longer speak of "middle Meccan" or "late Meccan" *sūras*. We can speak with more confidence of "early Meccan" *sūras*, although we cannot be certain as to which ones belong to this group. And we can speak of "Medinan *sūras*", i.e. those that are made up completely of Medinan material (of various dates). It is not possible to put the *sūras* as wholes in chronological order, or to determine the exact order of the passages on any major teaching—the creation, God and other supernatural beings, the nature and destiny of man, etc. This does not mean that nothing can be said on the development of ideas in the Kur'ān. On the major teachings and other subjects on which the Kur'ān has much to say, it is possible to reconstruct the sequence of the main stages of development, and sometimes the approximate dates of these stages. It now seems certain that the most important single turning point in the development of the Muslim scripture was not the Hijra, dividing the Kur'ān into "Meccan" and "Medinan" *sūras*, but a series of events surrounding the battle of Badr and Muḥammad's so-called "break with the Jews". Late Meccan and very early Medinan material is difficult to distinguish, there are many passages that could just as well date from Muḥam-

mad's last year in Mecca or his first in Medina.

6. Language and Style

a. Language of the Kur'ān. Most mediæval Muslim scholars believed that the Kur'ān was in the spoken language of the Prophet, the dialect of the Kuraysh, which was also the language of the "Classical Arabic" poetry of Muḥammad's day. It was assumed that the Kuraysh and the classical poets retained the pure language of the Bedouins (*al-aʿrāb*). Support for this view, more a theological doctrine than a linguistic theory, was found in the Kur'ān in the statements that the revelation was in "clear Arabic speech" (*lisān ʿarabī mubīn*) (XVI, 103, XXVI, 195, cf. XLI, 44), which came to be interpreted as "pure Arabic". This Kuraysh dialect theory was attacked by Karl Vollers in a series of well-documented articles beginning in 1894 and culminating in his classic *Volkssprache und Schriftsprache im alten Arabien* (1906), in which he argues that the Kur'ān was first recited by Muḥammad in a colloquial Arabic without case-endings (*iʿrāb*) (thus distinguishing it from the Classical Arabic of the poets), that the language of the Kur'ān as we now have it was a fabrication of later philologists who attempted to put the revelations into Classical Arabic, and that the original language of the Kur'ān survives only in a few orthographic peculiarities (e.g. the omission of the *alif* in some words) and in the non-canonical readings. Vollers's theory gave rise to much discussion of the language of the Kur'ān, but it found little support outside of Germany, except for several articles by Paul Kahle (e.g. *The Arabic readers of the Koran*, in *JNES*, VIII [1949], 65-71), who presented evidence to show that at least during the 2nd century the Kur'ān was indeed recited without *iʿrāb*, a characteristic of colloquial Arabic. Kahle's arguments also failed to convince others, and the earlier refutations of Vollers' thesis given in a lengthy review by R. Geyer (*Göttinger gelehrte Anzeigen*, clxxi [1909], 10-56) and by Nöldeke (*Neue Beiträge*, 1-5) have been generally accepted (on the views of Vollers, Kahle, Geyer, and Nöldeke, see Zwettler, *Oral tradition*, 112-30). Nöldeke (*loc. cit.*) and Schwally (*Gesch. des Qor.*, ii, 59) argued that the language of the Kur'ān was not the spoken language of any tribe, but was a somewhat artificial *Hochsprache* that was understood throughout the Ḥiǧāz. On the other side it has come to be generally agreed that the Classical Arabic of the poetry of Muḥammad's time was not the spoken language of the poets or the dialect of any one tribe, but a literary language that was understood by all the tribes. This language has come to be called the "poetic *koinè*" or the *ʿarabiyya*. In the late 1940s three European writers, H. Fleisch, R. Blachère, and C. Rabin, reached the conclusion, apparently independently, that the language of the Kur'ān, far from being the spoken dialect of the Kuraysh or a *Hochsprache* of the entire Ḥiǧāz, was simply the "poetic *koinè*" of the Classical Arabic poetry, with some adaptation to the Meccan speech, e.g. the omission of the *hamza* (for references and discussion, see C. Rabin, *The beginnings of Classical Arabic*, in *Stud. Isl.*, iv [1955], 19-37, and Zwettler, *Oral tradition*, 130-72). This view has been accepted by most Western Arabists. One notable exception is J. Wansbrough (*Quranic studies*, 85-123) who rejects the *koinè* or *ʿarabiyya* concept, without offering any clear alternative. He asserts that very little can be known about the text of the Kur'ān or about Classical Arabic prior to the "literary stabilisation" of both in the 3rd/9th century. There is nothing in the Kur'ānic usage of *ʿarabī* and its cognate forms to support the suggestion of J. Fück (*ʿArabiya*, Berlin 1950, 1-5) that *ʿarabī* in the expression "clear Arabic speech" refers to the *ʿarabiyya*, the literary language of the Bedouins.

b. Foreign vocabulary. The earliest exegetes recognised and discussed freely a large number of non-Arabic words in the Kur'ān, and Tradition credits Ibn ʿAbbās and his school with having a special interest in seeking their origin and meaning. Then when the dogma of the eternity and perfection of the Kur'ān was elaborated (see 8. below) some jurists and theologians, such as al-Shāfiʿī (d. 205/820), came to believe that it was in pure Arabic and thus denied that any of its vocabulary was borrowed from other languages. But prominent philologists such as Abū ʿUbayd (d. 224/838) continued to argue that the Kur'ān contained foreign words. Al-Ṭabarī (d. 311/923) and others, attempting to reconcile the two views, asserted that the alleged foreign elements in the Kur'ān were simply words that Arabic and other languages had in common. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Thaʿālibī (d. 873/1468) explained in his *Kitāb al-Djawāliḳī* (Algiers 1905, i, 17) that these words came into Arabic through the ancient Arabs' contacts with other languages in foreign travel and commercial affairs, but that they had been thoroughly Arabised by the time of the Prophet. Other writers seem to have freed themselves altogether from religious considerations, e.g. al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505), who gave special attention to foreign loan-words in the Kur'ān. In his *Itḳān* he has a chapter on words that are not in the language of the Ḥiǧāz (i, 133-5) and another on words that are not in the language of the Arabs (135-41). In a separate treatise, the *Muʿtaraḳkil* (ed. and tr. Wm. Y. Bell, Cairo 1924), he classifies a large number of terms as words borrowed from Ethiopic, Persian, Greek, Indian, Syriac, Hebrew, Nabataean, Coptic, Turkish, Negro, and Berber (for a discussion of these, see *Foreign vocab.*, 12-32). Jeffery indicates surprise that al-Suyūṭī was able to gather from the older authorities so many words "whose Arabic origin to us is obvious, but which they regarded as foreign", and he says that some of these are simply rare Arabic words, while others are variant forms used in the Kur'ān to establish the rhyme. He then concludes that the foreign elements in the Kur'ānic vocabulary are of three distinct types: (1) words that are entirely non-Arabic and cannot possibly be traced to Arabic roots, e.g. *istabraḳ* (silk brocade), *zandjabīl* (ginger), *firdaws* (paradise); (2) Semitic words that, although their triliteral root is found in Arabic, occur in the Kur'ān in a sense used in another language but not in Arabic, e.g. *fāṭir* (creator), *ṣawāmiʿ* (cloisters), *darasa* (to study [the scriptures] earnestly), and (3) words that are genuinely Arabic and commonly used, but are used in the Kur'ān with technical or theological meanings influenced by other languages, e.g. *nūr*, "light", used in the sense of "religion"; *rūḥ*, 'spirit', and especially *rūḥ al-ḳudus*, "the spirit of holiness"; and *kalima*, "a word", when used of Jesus (*ibid.*, 39 f.). Jeffery then discusses about 275 words, other than proper names, that have been regarded as foreign, and he summarises the views of earlier European scholars as to their origin, and sometimes gives his own views. For the Arabic and European literature on this topic, see *ibid.*, xi-xix, to which should be added two studies by L. Kopf, *Religious influences on mediæval Arabic philology*, in *Stud. Isl.*, v (1956), esp. 40-5, and *The treatment of foreign words in mediæval Arabic lexicology*, in *Scripta Hierosolymitana*, ix (1961), 191-205 (both reprinted

in Kopf, *Studies in Arabic and Hebrew lexicography*, Jerusalem 1976) and other works cited by him.

c. Rhymes and refrains. A distinctive feature of Kur'ānic style, closely related to its oral nature and liturgical function, is that it is all rhymed or assonanced prose. There is no attempt to produce the strict rhyme of Arabic poetry (see Zwettler, *Oral tradition*, 103-10). Some short *sūras*, and segments of longer *sūras*, do have a fairly consistent rhyme if the short inflectional vowels at the ends of the verses are disregarded. For instance, the three verses of CVIII end in *-ar*, the four verses of CXII end in *-ad*, CV has *-īl* except for the last verse with *-īl*, CXI has *-ab* except for the last verse with *-ad*, and the 55 verses of LIV end in *-r* (or *-rr*) preceded by a short vowel. But in most *sūras* there is a loose rhyme or assonance formed by common grammatical endings and word forms. By far the most frequent assonance in the Kur'ān is *-īna/-īn* (considered interchangeable), which is formed by the plural endings of nouns and verbs. And even this form, which occurs frequently in Arabic, is often varied with words ending with one of these vowels but a different consonant. The feminine singular endings *-at* and *-āt* occur in CIX, XLVII, XCI and XCIX, the dual ending *-ān* occurs in LV, the accusative ending *-an* occurs in XVIII, LXXII and C; and the form *-ā(l)*, a long *a* followed by a variable consonant, occurs in parts of longer *sūras* such as II, III, XIV, XXXVIII and XL. On the various rhyme forms in the Kur'ān (technically known as *fa'il*, *fi'āl*, *fā'at*, *if'āl*, *taf'il*, etc.), see *Itḳān*, II, 96-105, and F. R. Müller, *Untersuchungen zur Reimprosa im Koran* (Bonn 1969), who presents a systematic compilation of the evidence that peculiarities in Kur'ānic style and vocabulary were brought about by the imposition of rhyme.

The whole of the Kur'ān is often said to be in *sadj'*, the rhythmic, rhymed utterance of the *kāhin* (soothsayer) [*q.v.*], which, like the Kur'ān, does not have a fixed metre or proper rhyme and is thus distinct from both poetry and prose. But those who have insisted that the Kur'ān is not in *sadj'* seem on the whole to be on sounder ground (see *Gesch. des Qor.*, I, 36 ff., Blachère, *Intr.*, 212, Zwettler, *Oral tradition*, 137 ff.). Some of the shorter *sūras* do have short, rhythmic, rhymed verses of the *sadj'* type, often beginning with oaths, e.g. XC to XCIII (see 7.a below), and parts of a few somewhat longer *sūras*, e.g. the beginning of LXXV and LXXXII, LXXXV can be described as being "*sadj'* like". But most *sūras* have longer, prosaic verses that are simply made to fit a loose rhyme or assonance pattern. In some a distinctive, fairly consistent rhyme is formed by words that are integral to a context and its meaning, giving the impression of being carefully constructed compositions, e.g. XVIII, XX. But in others, especially some of the *sūras* that are completely Medinan, the rhyme is formed by set formulas that are attached loosely to the ends of the verses, often with little or no connection of thought with the contexts. For instance, in II, the longest *sūra* in the Kur'ān, the rhyme in about three-fourths of the 286 verses is formed by divine epithets, aphorisms, and other formulas that often have little relevance for the meaning of the narrative. In verses 127-268 double divine epithets occur over 30 times, e.g. God is *samī' 'alīm* (Hearer, Knower) occurs seven times, *'azīz ḥakīm* (Mighty, Wise), six times; *ghafūr raḥīm* (Forgiving, Compassionate), six times, etc. Theological aphorisms occur even more often, and some are repeated several times. "God is not heedless of the things you do", in verses 74, 140, 144, 149, etc. "God sees the things you do", in 110, 233, 237, 265, etc.; "God has knowledge of everything", in 29, 231, 282; and "God is powerful over everything", in 20, 106, 259 and 284, etc.

A special type of rhyme-formula that occurs in a number of *sūras* is the refrain, i.e. an entire verse or more repeated verbatim at more or less regular intervals. The most striking example is the rhetorical question, "Then which of the benefits of your Lord will you two deny?", which occurs as LV, 13, 16, 18 and 21 and then almost every other verse to the end of the *sūra* in verse 78. A similar refrain, 'Woe is that day to those who deny it!' occurs in LXXVII, 15, 19, 24, 28, 34, 37, 40, 45, 47 and 49. In both of these cases the refrain has little connection with the meaning of the other verses, and it is difficult to tell whether the latter should be read as an introduction (see Bell, *Trans.*, 627 f.) or a conclusion (e.g., Arberry trans., II, 318 f.) to the ten segments ranging in length from two to five verses. Each of the seven punishment-stories in XXVI ends with the two verses, "Lo, in that is a sign, but most of them have not believed" and "But, lo, thy Lord is the Sublime, the Compassionate", which appear to be separate refrains, the latter being later. Four punishment-stories in LIV end with 'We have made the Kur'ān as the Reminder (*dhikr*), but is there anyone who takes heed?", and the first three also have what appears to be an earlier refrain, "Of what nature, then, was My punishment and My warning?" Similar formulas occur frequently in the Kur'ān, but usually not as refrains. On internal rhymes and the possibility that there are strophes within the Kur'ān, see Bel, Watt, 70-5.

d. Schematic form and multiple accounts. The last two examples of refrains occur in stories that also share another characteristic of Kur'ānic style, schematic form, i.e. the repetition of certain verses, or formulas that are woven into the narrative in a regular pattern in different stories presented together as a group. A good example of one type of schematic form occurs in XXVI, where five punishment-stories have the same five-verse introduction, as well as the refrains mentioned above and other repeated verses. The introduction of the first story reads: "The people of Noah denied the envoys. / When their brother Noah said to them: 'Will you not show piety? / Lo, I am to you a faithful messenger. / So show piety towards God, and obey me. / I ask you for no reward for it; my reward rests only upon the Lord of the worlds' ". The only difference in the five-verse introductions of the other four accounts is the name of the people (the tribes of 'Ād, Thamūd, etc.) and the prophet (Hūd, Ṣāliḥ, Lot, etc.). Another type of schematic form occurs in the Sūra VII versions of the same five punishment-stories, where about two-thirds of the Noah story is repeated in the Hūd story (a smaller percentage is repeated in the others), but the repeated parts are interspersed with statements, phrases, and individual words that are distinctive to each story. To show the first stage in the development of this group of schematic accounts, the Noah story is given here with the elements that also occur in the Hūd story put in italics: "We sent Noah to his people, and *he said 'O my people, serve God. There is no god for you other than He.* Verily I fear for you the punishment of a mighty day'. *Said the nobility of his people. 'Verily we think you are in manifest error'. He said 'O my people, there is no error in me; I am but a messenger from the Lord of the worlds. I deliver to you the messages of my Lord,* and give you *sincere* advice; I have knowledge from

God which you have not *Does it astonish you that a reminder from your Lord should come to you upon a man from among yourselves, in order that he may warn* you and that you may show piety? Perhaps mercy will be shown you". But they denied him, so *We rescued him and those with him* in the ark, and We drowned *those who denied Our signs*. Verily they were a blind people." Part of the Noah story and other parts of the Hūd story are then repeated in the Ṣāliḥ, Lot, and Shu'ayb stories. Other groups of parallel accounts in the Kur'ān have one of these two types of schematic form. The extent of the repetition in these parallel accounts has important implications for understanding their nature and purpose, e.g. they are not intended as historical accounts.

These groups of punishment-stories also illustrate another feature of the Kur'ān: the complex development of its multiple accounts and their changing relationships with other accounts. Many stories are repeated in different versions in two or more *sūras*, and these multiple accounts of the same story differ not only in length and details, but also in their purpose and their relationship to other stories. For instance, different versions of the punishment-stories or brief references to them occur in 26 different *sūras*. Longer versions of the Noah, Hūd, Ṣāliḥ, and Lot stories occur in LIV, XXVI, VII and XI; the first three also occur in XXV, LI and LIII; they are referred to in IX, XIV and XXIX; and they occur separately in still other *sūras*. There are two different Lot punishment stories: the first occurs in LIV, XXVI and VII (mentioned above) and also in XXVII and XXXVII; the second, involving the visit of celestial messengers, occurs in XI and XV. Then in XXIX both appear together separated by a brief version of an Abraham story, which also occurs in earlier, longer versions in LI, XV and XI. On the punishment-stories, see 7.d below, Bell-Watt, 127-35, and bibliography given there. A similar development can be seen in the creation stories: the story of (the fallen angel?) Iblīs occurs as a complete, independent story in XV and XXXVIII and is repeated in shorter versions in XVII and XVIII, then it occurs with an account of the temptation and fall of Adam in VII, XX, and finally II. In the last two the Iblīs story is reduced to a single verse, and in II these two story segments are preceded by the only Kur'ānic version of a third creation story, about God consulting the angels before creating man. A third example, of a somewhat different type, involves the two parallel accounts of the miraculous births and childhood of John (the Baptist) and Jesus in XIX, 2-34 and III, 36-52. In XIX the stories of John and Jesus are the first two in a series of separate accounts, in III they are woven together as part of a longer account that begins with the birth and early life of Mary. Among the significant patterns seen in the development of these and other multiple accounts in the Kur'ān is that the earlier groups of stories tend to be ahistorical in their arrangement, e.g. in XXVI we have Moses, Abraham, Noah, Hūd, Ṣāliḥ, Lot, and then Shu'ayb (who came to be identified with Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses), while the later versions are put in "historical order", e.g. in XI we have Noah, Hūd, Ṣāliḥ, Abraham, Lot, Shu'ayb, and Moses. The ahistorical groups are typical of what Bell calls the Kur'ān period, while the "historical" ones reflect the Book period, where we see stories combined to form longer multi-episodic narratives that constitute the beginning of a Muslim sacred history going back to the creation.

7. Literary forms and Major Themes

The nature and arrangement of the Kur'ān make it difficult to classify its literary forms or systematize its main themes. Any attempt to classify the parts of the Kur'ān according to the standard literary types—myth, legend, saga, short story, parable, etc.—very soon founders. A few examples can be given for each of these types, but altogether they comprise a very small percentage of the text. Also, they have been adapted so much to conform to the style and message of the Kur'ān that they have little significance as distinct types. Bell has argued that since the Kur'ān disclaims that Muḥammad was a poet and since his function as a prophet was to convey messages from God to his contemporaries, we should seek "didactic rather than poetic or artistic forms" (Bell-Watt, 75). This is true, except that only parts of the Kur'ān can be described as "didactic" in purpose. Other parts are hortatory, rhetorical, legislative, etc., and some parts addressed to Muḥammad and his family can only be described as personal (Bell questioned whether some of these, e.g. CXI and parts of LXVI, were "intended for publication"). Thus it seems best to discuss the literary forms of the Kur'ān in terms of its own distinctive types of material. What follows is not a complete, systematic classification, but brief descriptions of the main literary forms found in the Kur'ān, which at the same time provide summaries of some of its major themes.

a. Oaths and related forms. An interesting variety of oaths and related forms occur in the shorter *sūras*, usually at the beginning. The assumption that most (but certainly not all) of these oaths are among the earliest parts of the Kur'ān seems to be justified. Some oaths that are cryptic and difficult to interpret or translate are generally thought to be typical of the ancient Arabian soothsayer utterances. In other cases, the oath form has simply been used to convey Kur'ānic (and sometimes Biblical) themes. The oath form that occurs most often consists of one or more verses beginning with *wa*, "By", followed by a noun in the genitive case, and ending with one or more verses beginning with an asseverative particle, usually *inna* but sometimes *laḳad*, both meaning "verily, surely". A fairly typical example occurs at the beginning of XCII: "By the night when it veils, / By the day when it shines out in splendour, / By what created the male and the female, / Verily your course is diverse" (Bell, tr.). Here the first three verses begin with *wa*, and the assertion closing the oath begins with *inna*. Sometimes the intervening verses between the opening *wa* verse and the closing *inna* begin with *fa-* instead of *wa*, as in XXXVII, 1-4: "By those who dress the ranks, / By those who scare by shouting, / By those who recite the warning, / Verily your God is One" (Bell). The *wa* and the *fa-* in the intervening verses can be interpreted as conjunctions (see, e.g., Arberry's tr. of these two passages), but this seems to weaken the impact of the oath. Some *wa/inna* oaths have only two elements (e.g. XXXVI, 2 ff., CIII, 1 ff.), while others have several, including additional *inna* assertions, e.g. LI begins with a six-verse oath, the verses beginning with *wa-*, *fa-*, *fa-*, *fa-*, *inna-mā*, *wa-inna*; and C has *wa-*, *fa-*, *fa-*, *fa-*, *fa-*, *inna*, *wa-inna*, *wa-inna* (other variations occur in XLIII, XLIV, LII, LIII, etc.). A fairly typical example of a *wa/laḳad* oath occurs at the beginning of XCV: "By the fig and the olive, / By Mount Sinai, / By this land secure, / Surely We have created man most beautifully erect" (Bell)—with *wa*, *wa*, *wa*, *la-laḳad*. The two-verse oath at the beginning

of XCI, the longest in the Kur'ān is also of the type, with *wa*, *wa*, *wa*, *wa*, *wa*, *wa*, *wa*, *fa-*, *lā*, *wa-lā* [the *wa* before the asseverative particles in these examples is the conjunction "and"]. Other types of oaths also occur in the Kur'ān, e.g. the stronger *lā uḳsimu bi-*, "No! I swear by", oath, at the beginning of LXXV, "No! I swear by the Day of Resurrection", also in LXXV, 2, XC, 1, and with other *ḳasam*.

Related to the Kur'ānic oaths are several other formulaic usages that are typical of soothsayer or prophetic utterances. One is the *iḏā*, "When", passage, which has the same force, if not the same meaning, as an oath. A good example occurs at the beginning of LXXXII: "When the heaven shall be rent, / When the stars shall be scattered, / When the seas shall be made to boil up, / When the graves shall be ransacked, / A soul shall know what it has sent forward, and what kept back" (Bell). The longest "when" passage is LXXXI, 1-14, culminating in "A soul shall know what it has presented". See also LVI, 1 ff., LXXXIV, 1 ff., XCIX, etc. Other passages, especially at the beginning of some of the other shorter *sūras*, feature rhetorical questions, such as "Have you seen him who denies the Judgment?" (CVII, 1 ff.; cf. XCIV, CV), or a modified type of curse or threat, such as "Woe to every maligner, scoffer, / Who gathers wealth and counts it over . . ." (CIV, 1 ff.; cf. LXXXIII, 1 ff., 10 ff., CVII, 4 ff., etc. and a different type in CXI). This last example of a "Woe" (*waylun*) passage continues with another distinctive Kur'ānic form, consisting of at least three verses the second of which is the rhetorical question *wa-mā adrāka mā* ———?, "And what has let you know what ——— is?"; see XCVII, 1 ff., CI, 1 ff., CIV, 4 ff., and LXXXVI, 1 ff., which begins with an oath.

The fact that the Kur'ān itself affirms that Muḥammad was accused of being a soothsayer (*kāhin*) suggests that his contemporaries saw a similarity between what he recited and what they heard from the soothsayers. Bell identified five passages in the Kur'ān as having "*kāhin*-form": XXXVII, 1-4, LI, 1-6, and C, 1-6, mentioned above, and also LXXVII, 1-7, and LXXIX, 1-14. But most of the Kur'ānic oaths and related forms are more in the nature of prophetic than soothsayer utterances.

b. **Sign-passages.** Meccan and early Medinan parts of the Kur'ān often speak of certain phenomena of nature and human life as "signs" (*āyāt*) of God's omnipotence and benevolence towards man, calling for gratitude and worship of Him alone. Most often mentioned are the creation of the heavens and the earth, the creation or procreation of man, the shining of the sun, moon, and stars, the alteration of day and night, the sending of the rain, and the permanence and stability of nature. Thunder, lightning, fire, and other natural phenomena are also mentioned, as are human understanding and relationships, the variety of languages and colours, hearing, sight, etc. The "sign-passages" treating these themes have no distinctive form, but are recognised by their content. An example of an early sign-passage is seen in LXXX, 24-32: "Let man look at his food, / Lo, We have poured out water in showers, / Then have broken up the earth in cracks, / And have caused to sprout up in it grain, / And grapes and green shoots, / And olives and palms, / And orchards luxuriant, / And fruits and herbage ——— / A provision for you and for your flocks" (Bell). See also XXIII, 17-22, 78-80, LXXVIII, 6-16. An example of a late, more structured sign-passage is XXX, 20-5, which begins: "And of His signs is that He created you of dust, then lo, you are mortals, all scattered abroad. / And of His signs is that He created for you of your own species spouses that you may dwell with them, and has set love and mercy between you. Surely in that are signs (*āyāt*) for those who consider. / And of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the variety of your tongues and hues. Surely in that are signs for all living beings". The next three verses also begin with "And of His signs is ———", and the first two of these end with "Surely in that are signs for those who ———" ("hear" in verse 23 "understand" in 24). A similar sign-passage in XVI 10-18, begins: "It is He who sends down to you out of heaven water of which you have to drink, . . . / And thereby He brings forth for you crops, and olives, and palms, and vines, and all manner of fruit. Surely in that is a sign (*āya*) for those who reflect" And a similar formula closes the next two verses. These last two examples are typical of most sign-passages in consisting of separate sign verses grouped together in no particular order, but they are somewhat unusual in having set introductory phrases and concluding formulas (cf. VI, 97-9, XIII, 2-4, XVI, 65, 67, 69, 79, XXXVI, 33, 37, 41, XLI, 37, 39, XLV, 3-5). The singular, *āya*, is used occasionally in sign-passages, either with one verse treating one sign (as in XVI, 11, quoted above; also XVI, 13, 65, 67, etc.), or with two or more verses treating a single sign (XVI, 10 f., 68 f., etc.). The plural, *āyāt*, occurs much more often, usually with two or more signs mentioned in a single verse (as in XXX, 20-2, quoted above; also X, 6, 67, XIII, 3 f., XXX, 23 f., etc.) This analysis provides no clue as to how *āya* came to mean "verse". In many sign-passages that are otherwise like those cited above the term "sign" does not occur (e.g. VI, 141 f., XIII, 12-15, XVI, 3-8, 80 f., XXX, 48-51, XXXII, 4-9). On the other hand, the term "sign" occurs many times in contexts that are not "sign-passages". See 1.b above and Bell Watt, 111 7

c. **Say passages.** Scattered throughout the Kur'ān are a number of passages in which the main element is a short statement or question introduced by the imperative verb, "Say", usually the singular, *qul*, but occasionally the plural, *ḳūlū*. Most say-passages, i.e. the immediate contexts in which the say-statements occur, have two main parts: (1) a statement or question indicating the setting and (2) the say statement, which is sometimes followed by a comment or two on 1 or 2. The setting statement occasionally involves Muḥammad's followers, but usually is a report of something said or done by the unbelievers. One frequently occurring form is "They say ——— Say. . . .", e.g. X, 20: "They say 'If only a sign had been sent down to him from his Lord'. Say 'The unseen belongs to God' " (see also II, 80, 91, 95, 111, 135, etc.). Sometimes the setting statement has two or more parts, and the say-statement either has two or more parts or is followed by one or more comments. A good example of this more complex form is seen in X, 18: "They serve apart from God what neither injures them nor profits them, and they say: 'These are our intercessors with God'. Say: 'Will you inform God of what He knows not either in the heavens or in the earth?' Glory be to Him, and exalted be He far from what they associate with Him!" Here the setting statement has two parts, involving something the unbelievers do and something they say; and the say-statement, a rhetorical question, is followed by a praise formula (cf. II, 80-2). In X, 68 f. a praise formula, "Glory be to Him", and

a comment on the setting statement come between the "They say" and "Say" elements. Another common form is "They will ask you [Muḥammad] Say . . . .", e.g. II, 220. "They will ask you about the orphans. Say, 'To set right their affairs is good'." Sometimes one *qul* introduces a question, and a second one gives an answer, e.g. VI, 12: "Say: 'To whom belongs what is in the heavens and the earth?' Say 'To God . . .'" (also VI, 63 f., 71, etc.). Some say-statements are formulas that can be classified as maxims or slogans, e.g. "To God belongs the East and the West" (II, 142), "The guidance of God is the guidance" (II, 120, III, 73, VI, 71), "God guides to the truth" (X, 35), "Those who invent falsehood about God will not prosper" (X, 69), and "Intercession belongs to God alone" (XXXIX, 44), and some of these (e.g. the first two mentioned here) occur elsewhere in the Kur'ān. On maxims and slogans, see Bel-Watt, 75-7. Others are credal statements, e.g. II, 136: "Say (*qūlū*) 'We believe in God and what has been revealed to us and what was revealed to Abraham . . . and what Moses and Jesus received . . . and to Him we have surrendered'" (cf. XXIX, 46). Still others are prayers, e.g. III, 26 f. "Say (*qul*): 'O God, owner of sovereignty, Thou givest sovereignty to whom Thou wilt, and seizest sovereignty from whom Thou wilt . . . Thou bringest forth the living from the dead, and the dead from the living; Thou providest for whom Thou wilt without reckoning'." This last example is unlike the say-passages described above, since it is not preceded by a setting statement. Thus it is best classified with a second group of say-statements, some of which are in the first person singular and seem to be spoken by Muḥammad, e.g. a group of four in LXXII, 20-8, beginning: "Say: 'I call only upon my Lord, and I do not associate with Him anyone'. / Say: 'Surely I possess no power over you, either for hurt or for rectitude'" (Arberry); see also XXXIV, 36, 39, 46-50, CIX, etc. Other isolated say-statements occur in LXVII, 23 f., 28-30, CXII-XIV, etc., the first of these being two short say-statements in the form of the sign-passages. Say passages and separate say-statements are often grouped together, e.g. VI, 11-19, 56-8, 63-6, 161-4, and the groups mentioned above.

d. Narratives. If the term "narrative" is taken in the broader sense to include any story or description of actual or fictional events, then many parts of the Kur'ān can be classified as narratives. There is virtually no historical narrative, even though as mentioned above (see 3.a) there are many references and allusions to historical events. Most Kur'ānic narratives are versions of traditional stories found in other Near Eastern cultures, which have been adapted to conform to the world-view and teachings of the Kur'ān. Several versions of ancient Near Eastern myths and many mythic motifs occur. The creation of the world in six days and the Throne from which the universe is controlled are mentioned several times, as in VII, 54. "Verily your Lord is God, who created the heavens and the earth in six days, then seated Himself upon the Throne causing the night to cover the day" and the well-known 'Throne verse', II, 255. "God, there is no god but He, the Living, the Eternal. Slumber overtakes Him not nor sleep. His Throne extends over the heavens and the earth, and He is never weary of preserving them" (cf. X, 3, XXV, 59, XXXII, 4, and on the Throne, IX, 129, XIII, 2, XX, 5, XXI, 22, etc.). But there is no six-day creation story, and no account of what was created on each day (a partial explanation is given in XLI, 9-12, see Paret, *Kommentar*, 433). The seven heavens are mentioned (XVII, 44, XXIII, 86, etc.), as is the Trumpet that signals the Last Day (VI, 73, XVIII, 99, XX, 102, etc.), but there are no stories or complete descriptions. Brief accounts of the fall of Iblīs (Lucifer?), the fall of man, and the naming of the animals (not so specified) do occur (II, 30-9, VII, 11-25, XV, 28-44, XVII, 61-5, XX, 115-26, etc.). There are several versions of the ancient Near Eastern shooting-star myth (XV, 16-18, XXXVII, 6-10, etc.), and several accounts of Noah and the Flood (XI, 36-48, XXV, 37, XXIX, 14 f., LIV, 9-17) which however is not a world-wide deluge.

The prophet stories, some of which are also punishment stories, make up the largest category of Kur'ānic narratives. The longest single story, which could be classified as a "short story", is that of Joseph, taking up nearly all 111 verses of Sūra XII. It follows the Biblical account more closely than do most Kur'ānic stories, and it shows evidence of revision, including what appear to be two introductions. There are two parallel accounts of the births of John (the Baptist) and Jesus, III, 33-51 and XIX, 1-36, which have some significant differences in details, reflecting the development of ideas in the Kur'ān. Both accounts have elements from apocryphal Christian writings and oral tradition, e.g. Mary's stay in a convent or temple until the time of the conception of Jesus, and his miracles of speaking from the cradle and forming a bird out of clay that became alive when he breathed on it. Abraham, Moses, and Solomon have major roles in Kur'ānic narrative in that there are several different stories about each, as well as several versions of some stories. Also, there are non-Biblical stories about each of these three: Abraham destroying the idols of his people (XXI, 51-72, etc.) and building the Ka'ba in Mecca (II, 119-9, etc.), Moses and his servant on a journey (XVIII, 60-82), and Solomon building the Temple with the jinn and demons (XXXIV, 12-14, XXXVIII, 36-40) and dealing with his army of jinn, men, and birds (XXVII, 15-21). There are also stories about Adam and Noah (mentioned above) and Lot, Ishmael, David, Elijah, Jonah, and Job; and several others are mentioned, including Isaac, Jacob, Elisha, Aaron (in some Moses stories), Saul, Ezra, and Haman, who however is an associate of the Pharaoh. The heroes of these stories are generally referred to as "messengers" (*rusul*, sing. *rasūl*), but sometimes as "envoys" (*mursalūn*, sing. *mursal*) or "prophets" (*nabiyyūn*, sing. *nabī*). The latter seems to occur only in Medinan passages and is applied specifically only to Muḥammad and certain "messengers" mentioned above from the Hebrew and Christian traditions, while the other two terms occur earlier and have broader usages. But in later parts of the Kur'ān *rasūl* and *nabī* are synonymous, although not exactly interchangeable. Note, for instance, the consistent usage, "God and His Messenger", but "the Prophet", for Muḥammad throughout XXXIII. This no doubt explains why *rusul* occurs in the credal statements in II, 285 and IV, 136, which require belief in "His angels, His books, and His messengers (*rusulihi*)", while *al-nabiyyūn* occurs in II, 177, which requires belief in "the angels, the Book, and the prophets". Among the non-Biblical characters, the most prominent are Hūd, Ṣāliḥ, and Shu'ayb (see below), but there are also stories about Luḳmān, an Arabian sage (XXXI, 12-19), and Dhu 'l-Karnayn, generally regarded as Alexander the Great (XVIII, 83-98), and brief references to Dhu 'l-Kifl and Idrīs (XIX, 56, XXI, 85, XXXVIII, 48), sometimes said to be Elijah and Enoch. The story of the Men of the Cave (XVIII,

10-26) is usually identified with the legend of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus. On these stories, see the commentaries and Paret, *Kommentar*, *ad locc.*

Several forms are used indiscriminately for introducing prophet stories and some of the stories about non-Biblical characters, e.g. "Recite to them the story (*naba'*) of ..." (V, 27, VII, 175, X, 71, XXVI, 69, cf. XVIII, 27, XXIX, 45); "We recite to you [Muḥammad] part of the story (*naba'*) of ..." (XXVIII, 3; cf. III, 58); "Has there come to you the story (*ḥadīth*) of ...?" (XX, 9, LI, 24, LXXIX, 15, etc.), "Has there come to you the story (*naba'*) of ...?" (IX, 70, XIV, 9, XXXVIII, 21, etc.); and "Mention in the Book ..." (XIX, 16, 42, 51, 54, 56). All of these are addressed to Muḥammad. Far more frequent are two simple forms, *idh qāla*, "(Recall) when ——— said", said of Moses (V, 20, XIV, 6, XVIII, 60, XXVII, 7, etc.), Abraham (VI, 74, XIV, 35, etc.), Joseph (XII, 4), God (V, 110, 116, XV, 28, XVII, 61, XVIII, 50, etc.), and others, and *wa-laqad arsalnā*, "And We sent", said of Noah (XI, 25, XXIII, 23, XXIX, 14, etc.; cf. VII, 59), Moses (XI, 96, XIV, 5, etc.; cf. XXIII, 45), and others. Cf. *wa-laqad ātaynā*, "And We gave" (e.g. "And We gave Moses the Book") in XVII, 101, XXI, 48, 51, XXXI, 12, XXXIV, 10, etc.

One special type of Kur'ānic narrative that made up a major part of the revelation during the Meccan years is the punishment-story, discussed above for its use of refrains and schematic form in some versions. Five punishment-stories stand out from the others, those of Noah, Hūd and the tribe of 'Ād, Ṣāliḥ and the tribe of Thamūd, Lot, and Shu'ayb and the people of Midian. And two others are prominent in some *sūras*, the story of Moses and the drowning of Pharaoh's army, and the story of Abraham rejecting the idols of his people. These seven occur together in XXVI, 10-191, and are mentioned together in XXII, 42-4. Fairly complete versions of some of these stories also occur in VII, 59-93 (all but Abraham and Moses), XI, 25-95 (all but Moses), XXXVII, 75-148 (only the Biblical ones), and LIV, 9-42 (all but Abraham and Shu'ayb). Shorter versions of some of these seven and references to these and some others (Jonah, the people of Sheba, the men of al-Rass, and the people of Tubba') occur in IX, 70, XIV, 9, XXI, 48-77, XXIII, 23-48, XXV, 35-40, XXVII, 7-58, L, 12-14, LI, 24-46, LIII, 50-5, LXIX, 4-10, and LXXXIX, 6-14. The "men of al Ḥijr" in XV, 80-4, are probably the tribe of Thamūd; the "men of the Grove" (XV, 78 f., XXVI, 176-91, etc.) seem to be identical with the people of Midian (see MADYAN SHU'AYB); and "the subverted (cities)" (*al-mu'tafikāt*) are most likely Sodom and Gomorrah, the cities of Lot. Thus these three are apparently variations of three of the seven. Most Western scholars have accepted the view of A. Sprenger (*Leben*, I, 462) and J. Horovitz (*Koranische Untersuchungen*, 26-8) that the term *mathānī* in XV, 87 and XXXIX, 23 (see 1.b above) refers to the seven most prominent punishment-stories, since the first verse says "seven of the *mathānī* and the mighty *Qur'ān*" have been sent down to Muḥammad by God, and the second describes the Book sent down to Muḥammad as having *mathānī* "at which the skins of those who fear their Lord do creep". See Paret, *Kommentar*, 179 f., and Bell-Watt, 134 f.

The Qur'ān also contains some parables, the longest and clearest one being the parable of the Blighted Garden in LXVIII, 17-33. Others include the parable of the man with two gardens (XVIII, 32-44), the good and corrupt trees (XIV, 24-7), and the unbelieving town (XXXVI, 13-32). Several other brief parables are little more than expanded similes, e.g. the fire at night in II, 17, the downpour in II, 19, the slave in XVI, 75, the dumb man in XVI, 76, the water and vegetation in XVIII, 45, the light of God in XXIV, 35, the master and his slaves in XXX, 28, and the slave with several masters in XXXIX, 29 (see Bell-Watt, 61). These parables have no standard form, some are introduced by the statement addressed to Muḥammad: "And coin for them a parable" (*wa 'drib lahum mathalan*), e.g. XVIII, 32, 45, XXXVI, 13, others by the statement: "God has coined a parable" (*ḍaraba 'llāhu mathalan*), e.g. XIV, 24, XVI, 75, 76, 212, XXXIX, 29, LXVI, 10.

e. **Regulations.** The Qur'ān provides detailed regulations on some aspects of the conduct of the Muslim community, and general instructions on others. No complete code of conduct or list of required duties is presented, each issue is treated separately, usually in several different places. The main religious duties are introduced in stages, and there are inconsistencies in some of the requirements. What follows are some examples that illustrate the nature and form of the various Qur'ānic regulations, beginning with four that later became Pillars of Islam.

On the prayer ritual (*ṣalāt*). "Observe thou [Muḥammad] the Prayer (*aḳimi 'l-ṣalāt*) at the two ends of the day and the neighbouring parts of the night" (XI, 114; cf. XVII, 78 f.); "Remember the Prayers (*ṣalawāt*), including the middle Prayer, and stand [in worship] to God reverently" (II, 238); "so recite what is convenient of it [the Qur'ān], and observe the Prayer (*aḳimi 'l-ṣalāt*), and pay the Zakāt, and lend to God a good loan" (LXXIII, 20); "verily the Prayer has become for the believers a thing prescribed for stated times" (IV, 103). On almsgiving (*zakāt*, *ṣadaḳa*): "If you give alms (*ṣadaḳāt*) publicly it is well, but if you conceal it and give to the poor it is better for you" (II, 271), "Observe the Prayer, pay the *zakāt* (*wa 'l-zakāt*), and obey the Messenger" (XXIV, 56); "The alms (*ṣadaḳāt*) are for the poor and the destitute, for the agents employed therein, for those whose hearts are to be won over, for the ransom of slaves, for the relief of debtors, for expenditure in the way of God, and for the follower of the way—an ordinance (*farīḍa*) from God" (IX, 60). On fasting (*ṣiyām*, *ṣawm*): "O believers, fasting is prescribed for you (*kutiba 'alaykum*) as it was for those before you ... [during] the month of Ramaḍān ... It is allowable for you on the night of the fast to go in to your wives ... and eat and drink until so much of the dawn appears that a white thread may be distinguished from a black; then keep the fast completely until night" (II, 183-7). On the Pilgrimage (*ḥadjdj*, *'umra*): "Fulfil the pilgrimage (*ḥadjdj*) and the visitation (*'umra*) unto God. ... If anyone of you is sick or suffering from an injury to the head, then a compensation (*fidya*) by way of fasting or almsgiving (*ṣadaḳa*) or pious observance" (II, 196), "Ṣafā and Marwa are among the manifestations of God. ... It is no fault (*djunāḥ*) if anyone makes the circuit of them" (II, 158).

These four religious duties are required of all Muslims only in Medinan passages dating from around the time of the battle of Badr or later. The *ṣalāt* is mentioned in Meccan or early Medinan passages, but is required only of Muḥammad, with the imperative verb in the singular, *aḳimi 'l-ṣalāt* (XI, 114, XVII, 78, XXIX, 45, XXX, 31, etc.). The term *zakāt* in Meccan passages (XVIII, 81, XIX, 13) means "purity". Passages that are late Meccan or early Medinan say that earlier prophets instituted the

ṣalāt and the *zakāt* (X, 87, XIV, 40, XIX, 30 f., 54 f., XX, 14, XXI, 73, etc.), or recommend them to the Muslims as signs of piety (II, 177, XXVII, 1-4, etc.). Then in passages dating from the year 2 A.H. and later these two practices are required of Muslims, with the imperative verbs in the plural, *aḳīmū 'l-ṣalāt* and *āti 'l-zakāt* (II, 43, IV, 77, 103, IX, 11, XXII, 78, XXIV, 56, LVIII, 13, LXXIII, 20, etc.). The Muslim fast was introduced in two or probably three stages in the Ḳur'ān (see Wagtendonk, *Fasting in the Koran*, 41-127), and the pilgrimage was adopted as a Muslim ritual probably before Badr, but was not practised as such until the last years of Muḥammad's life.

The form used most frequently for introducing and stressing regulations for the Muslim community is the plural imperative verb, seen several times in the examples given above and often elsewhere involving a variety of practices, e.g., "O believers, when you stand up for the Prayer, wash your faces and your hands up to the elbows, and wipe your heads and your feet up to the ankles" (V, 6) "O believers, show piety towards God and abandon the usury that remains if you are believers' (II, 278); "O believers, when you contract a debt with another for a stated term, write it down" (II, 282), "Fight in the way of God those who fight you but do not provoke hostility" (II, 190); "Contribute in the way of God, and not yourselves over to destruction, but do well" (II, 195). Sometimes negative commands are given, as in VI, 151: "Come, let me repeat what your Lord has forbidden you: do not associate anything with Him . . . do not kill your children because of poverty —do not draw near indecencies . . . do not kill the person whom God has made forbidden except with justification' ; *cf.* XVII, 22 39. The expression *kutiba 'alaykum*, "prescribed for you is", seen in II, 183, above on fasting, also occurs elsewhere, e.g. "O believers, retaliation in the matter of the slain is prescribed for you, the free for the free, the slave for the slave, the female for the female, so if anyone is forgiven anything by his [injured] brother, let him follow it with what is reputable, and pay with kindness" (II, 178), and "Prescribed for you, when death draws nigh to one of you, and he has goods to leave, is the making of a testament in favour of parent and relatives reputable—a duty resting upon those who show piety" (II, 180) And an expression having the opposite meaning, *ḥurrimat 'alaykum*, "forbidden to you is", also occurs, e.g. in IV, 23, and V, 3. Other forms and many other regulations occur, especially in the *sūras* that are completely Medinan. Some of these passages can be classified as commandments or divine legislation, others are more in the nature of religious instruction or exhortation.

f. Liturgical forms. While all of the Ḳur'ān is recited in liturgical settings, only some parts are distinctly liturgical in form. By far the most important part of the Ḳur'ān for use in worship is the opening *sūra*, the *Fātiḥa*, a seven-verse prayer recited at least twice in each performance of the *ṣalāt*. Whether or not the *Fātiḥa* [*q.v.*] was considered to be part of the Ḳur'ān during Muḥammad's lifetime is uncertain. Prayers might seem out of place in a text in which God is the speaker, but others also occur, the best example being the prayer at the end of Sūra II: "O our Lord, take us not to task if we forget, or make a mistake, O our Lord, lay not upon us a task such as Thou didst lay on those before us . . . Pardon us and forgive us, and have mercy upon us Thou art our patron; so help us against the people of unbelievers" (Bell). Some prayers are also included within narratives, e.g. Abraham's prayer in XIV, 35-41. Exaltations, in which God is praised in the third person, occur more frequently; the best known of these is the "Throne verse", II, 255, mentioned in 7.d above for its mythic motif. The divine epithets mentioned in 6.c above as rhyme phrases are also a type of praise formula, which however do not give the impression of being liturgical. Praise forms that do seem to have a liturgical purpose occur at the beginning of several Medinan *sūras*. A *sabbaḥa li 'llāh* formula, "Magnifies God (*sabbaḥa li 'llāh*) all that is in the heavens and the earth", occurs at the beginning of LVII, LIX, LXI, LXII and LXIV, three of which continue with "He is the Almighty, the All wise". These five *sūras* date mainly from the middle Medinan years, after the completion of the *sūras* that begin with revelation formulas and the mysterious letters (see 4.d above). The liturgical setting of the *sabbaḥa li 'llāh sūras* is suggested by their introductions and conclusions. One might conjecture that the Friday prayer service was the occasion for the first recitation of these *sūras* (see LXII, 9-11), and possibly also those with the revelation formulas. Other praise formulas, which may or may not have specifically liturgical functions within the Ḳur'ān, include the *taḥmīd*, i.e. *al-ḥamdu li 'llāh*, "Praise be to God", at the beginning of I VI, XVIII, XXXIV and XXXV, and in VII, 43, X, 10, XVII, 111, etc., the *tasbīḥ*, i.e. *subḥāna 'llāh*, "Glory be to God", occurring with variations in XVII, 1, 93, 108, XXVIII, 68, XXXVI, 36, XXXVII, 180-2, XLIII, 82, etc., and *tabāraka 'llāh*, "Blessed be God", occurring with variations in VII, 54, XXIII, 14, XXV, 1, 10, 61, XL, 64, XLIII, 85, LV, 78 and LXVII, 1.

Others. The Ḳur'ān contains other distinctive literary forms and themes that can be mentioned only briefly here. Especially important in Meccan parts of the Ḳur'ān are a large number of dramatic scenes, usually involving death, the Last Judgment, the pleasures of paradise (*al-ǧanna* = the garden), and the tortures of the hellfire (see the O'Shaughnessy arts. in *Bibl.*) Dramatic scenes constitute the main Ḳur'ānic form for treating these subjects, which are nowhere fully or systematically explained, and they also occur frequently in narratives, reflecting the oral qualities of these Meccan parts of the Ḳur'ān (see Bell-Watt, 80 f.). There are also many addresses on a variety of topics. Most Meccan ones treat theological topics—the signs of God, messages of earlier prophets, etc.—and thus can be classified as sermons. Early Medinan ones are often addressed to the Jews, either as the Children of Israel or the People of the Book. Later Medinan ones, usually addressed "O believers", but sometimes "O children of Adam" or "O people", treat specific legal, political, and military matters as well as general religious, moral, and social themes. Another special type of material found in both Meccan and Medinan parts of the Ḳur'ān involves Muḥammad's personal situation. Many Meccan passages addressed to Muḥammad bring comfort and encouragement in times of persecution, instructions on religious practices, etc. Some Medinan ones, addressed "O Prophet", give special marriage and divorce regulations. Others are addressed to Muḥammad's wives or otherwise treat his family problems (see *sūras* XXIV, XXXIII, LXVI).

8. The Ḳur'ān in Muslim Life and Thought

For Muslims the Ḳur'ān is much more than scripture or sacred literature in the usual Western sense. Its primary significance for the vast majority through the centuries has been in its oral form, the form in

which it first appeared, as the "recitation" (*qur'ān*) chanted by Muḥammad to his followers over a period of about twenty years (on its liturgical function during Muḥammad's lifetime, see VII, 203-5, LXXIII, 20, LXXXIV, 20 f., etc.). The revelations were memorised by some of Muḥammad's followers during his lifetime, and the oral tradition that was thus established has had a continuous history ever since, in some ways independent of, and superior to, the written Kur'ān. During the early centuries when the written Kur'ān was limited to the *scriptio defectiva* of the period (see 3.c above), the oral tradition established itself as the standard by which the written text was to be judged. Even when the Egyptian "standard edition" was prepared in the early 1920s, it was the oral tradition and its supporting *kurrā'* literature (rather than early Kur'ān mss.) that served as the authority for determining the written text. Through the centuries the oral tradition of the entire Kur'ān has been maintained by the professional reciters (*kurrā'*) (on Kur'ān reciters in Egypt, see M. Berger, *Islam in Egypt today*, Cambridge 1970, 11-13, 37 43, and for the oral tradition in general, Labib al-Said, *The recited Koran*, see *Bibl.*), while all Muslims memorise parts of the Kur'ān for use in the daily prayers. Until recently, the significance of the recited Kur'ān has seldom been fully appreciated in the West

The Kur'ān also had a central role in the theological debates of the early centuries, and it has continued to be one of the most controversial issues in Islamic theology. Since the Kur'ān was held to consist of messages brought from God to Muḥammad by Gabriel, and since God is the "speaker" in these messages, it was natural for Muslims to think of it as God's speech (*kalām*). About the time of Hārūn al-Rashīd, theologians began to discuss whether or not the Kur'ān was created. Among those who maintained that it was were the Mu'tazila, including some who had positions at the court of al-Ma'mūn Convinced by their arguments, and also thinking that adoption of the doctrine would be politically beneficial, al-Ma'mūn in 218/833 established the *miḥna* (*q.v.*) or "inquisition", in which most leading officials were obliged to profess publicly that the Kur'ān was created. Nearly all submitted but a few refused, notably Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241/855) (*q.v.*). In 234/848, shortly after the accession of al-Mutawakkil, the *miḥna* was abandoned, probably because its political results were disappointing Up through the time of the *miḥna* the issue seems to have been whether the Kur'ān was the actual speech of God or was created. Those who accepted the latter view, arguing that God "has never spoken and does not speak", were called by their opponents the Lafẓiyya (*q.v.*—see also Watt, *Formative period*, 143-8). Then Ibn Ḥanbal argued that the Kur'ān is part of God's knowledge (*'ilm*), and after the *miḥna* he accepted the expression "uncreated" (*ghayr makhlūḳ*) as a description of the Kur'ān. This led to the formulation of the doctrine that it is eternal (*ḳadīm*), argued for by al-Ash'arī (d. 323/935) (*q.v.*) and others. Although this became the standard Sunnī view (see, e.g. the 4th/10th century Ḥanafī creed called by Wensinck *Fiḳh Akbar II*, art. 3), it has not been accepted by all. The Ḥanbalī theologian Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328) (*q.v.*), for instance, disavowed this view, arguing that the question of the eternity or temporality of the Kur'ān was not an issue before the time of Ibn Ḥanbal, and that in affirming the uncreatedness of the Kur'ān the "pious ancestors", including Ibn Ḥanbal, never meant to assert its eternity. It should also be noted that even the expression *ghayr makhlūḳ* does not occur in Muslim creeds until after the *miḥna* (see, e.g. Wensinck, *Muslim Creed*, 103 f., 127, 189) and that the early discussions and creeds do not mention the Kur'ānic expression "preserved tablet" (*lawḥ maḥfūẓ*) [see LAWḤ] in LXXXV, 22, and "mother of the Book" (*umm al-kitāb*) in III, 7, which only later came to be interpreted as referring to a heavenly archetype of the Kur'ān in support of the doctrine of its eternity See W. Madelung, *The origins of the controversy concerning the creation of the Koran*, in *Orientalia Hispanica*, Leiden 1974, I, 504-25; W. M. Watt, *Early discussions about the Qur'ān*, in *MW*, xl (1950), 27-40, 96-105; idem, *Formative period*, 176 f., 242-5, 280-5, 293; J. Bouman, *The doctrine of 'Abd al-Djabbār on the Qur'ān as the created word of Allāh*, in *Verbum*, the H W Obbink *Festschrift*, Utrecht 1964, 67-86, H. Stieglecker, *Die Glaubenslehren des Islam*, Munich 1962, 75-89. For an outline of the views of the various schools on the Kur'ān as the *kalām Allāh*, see KALĀM.

Parallel to the development of the doctrine of the eternity of the Kur'ān there also arose the dogma of its inimitability *i'jāz*) (*q.v.*). From the beginning, the Kur'ān had been seen as a "sign" (*āya*) or "proof" (*burhān*) of Muḥammad's prophethood. This belief took a more precise form in the teaching that each prophet was given a verifying miracle (*mu'jiza*), and that the Kur'ān was Muḥammad's; the term *i'jāz*, it should be noted, still had not received its technical meaning as late as the time of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (see Tor Andrae, *Die Person Muhammeds in Lehre und Glaube*, Uppsala 1917, 101). Early discussion of the *i'jāz* of the Kur'ān centred around the concept of *taḥaddī* or "challenge", based largely on several verses of the Kur'ān (II, 23, X, 38, XI, 13, XVII, 88, etc.). The failure of Muḥammad's contemporaries to take up the challenge to produce even one *sūra* like those he recited was taken as proof that it was impossible. This argument was then supplemented by the concept of *ṣarfa* (lit. "turning away"), meaning that God prevented the competent from taking up the challenge. In one of the earliest treatises devoted solely to *i'jāz*, 'Alī b. 'Īsā al-Rummānī (d. 384/944) mentioned both of these arguments along with several others, involving the eloquence of the Kur'ān, its prophecies of future events, its establishment of new literary forms and style that surpass all others, etc. Ḥamd b. Muḥammad al-Khaṭṭābī (d. 388/998) in his *al-Bayān fī i'jāz al-Ḳur'ān* (see *Bibl.*) stressed the rhetorical eloquence of the Kur'ān, and al-Bāḳillānī (d. 403/1013) in the most famous work on the subject (see *Bibl.*) rejected the *ṣarfa* argument and compiled what he regarded as empirical evidence of the Kur'ān's superior style. He also argued that since Muḥammad was illiterate, he could not have read other scriptures or written down stories told by human informants, and thus Kur'ānic reports of past events and prophecies of future events are further proof of the miracle of the Kur'ān and its divine source. For summaries of the development of these views see *Ithbāt*, ii, 116-25 Abdul Aleem, *I'jāzu'l-Qur'ān*, in *IC*, vii (1933), 64-82, 215-33, J. Bouman, *Le conflit autour du Coran et la solution d'al-Bāqillānī*, Amsterdam 1959; H. Stieglecker, *op. cit.*, 371-408; and art. I'DJĀZ. The standard modern work on the subject is that of Muṣṭafā Ṣādiḳ al-Rāfi'ī (see *Bibl.*).

The doctrines of the eternity and perfection or inimitability of the Kur'ān contributed to its extensive influence throughout Islamic life and culture.

it became the first "source" (*aṣl*) of Islamic law, the *Sharī'a*, which also came to be regarded as eternal (cf. the Torah in Jewish belief). Its grammar became standard for later Arabic, which replaced other languages across the Near East and North Africa (among Christians and Jews as well as Muslims), and its script came to be adopted in Persian, Turkish, Urdu, and other languages. Verses of the Kur'ān became the main subject of Islamic calligraphy and one of the main decorative motifs of Islamic religious art and architecture, as a substitute for statues and pictorial representation. At the same time, these two doctrines have been the strongest factor working against the acceptance of critical studies of the Kur'ān within the modern Muslim community. In the early centuries, Muslim scholars studied the Kur'ān as literature and as a historical source, analysing its grammar, style, poetic imagery, etc., and attempting to determine its chronology, development of ideas, and historical settings. But the widespread acceptance of belief in the eternity and *i'jāz* of the Kur'ān has made modern Muslims loath to accept methods of historical and literary criticism that have proved so fruitful in the study of other scriptures. To a certain extent this is understandable to Christians, since the development of the doctrines of the eternity and *i'jāz* of the Kur'ān is parallel to the development of the doctrine of the Trinity, and the closest analogue in Christian belief to the role of the Kur'ān in Muslim belief is not the Bible, but Christ. Thus the difficulty Muslims have in adopting a critical approach to the Kur'ān is comparable to the difficulty many Christians have in accepting a critical view of the life of Jesus (e.g. regarding his virgin birth and resurrection). But this should not prevent critical analyses of the Kur'ān, which is after all still a literary work of supreme importance and an invaluable historical document.

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(A. T. Welch)

9. Translation of the Ḳur'ān

a. The orthodox doctrine concerning translation. In the time of Muḥammad it is certain that nobody had considered the possibility that the Ḳur'ān might be translated either as a whole or in part into a foreign language. It was revealed expressly as an "Arabic Ḳur'ān" (Sūra XII, 2; XX, 113; XXXIX, 28; XLI, 3; XLII, 7; XLIII, 3), in "clear Arabic language" (XVI, 103; XXVI, 195; cf. XLVI, 12), that the Prophet through it might "warn the capital (i.e., Mecca) and the people in its surroundings" (VI, 92; XLII, 7). It was not originally intended for non-Arabs. It was only as a result of the spread of the Arabic-Islamic conquests that the sphere of influence of the Ḳur'ān was extended to territories outside the Arabic-speaking world. The Persians and other non-Arabs who embraced Islam were obliged, in the same way as their genuinely Arab fellow-believers, to recite in the ritual prayer the Fātiḥa and several other texts from the Ḳur'ān. The question thus arose whether they should be permitted to recite the texts in question in their native language instead of in Arabic. In so far as Muslims from the non-Arabic-speaking territories were interested in getting to know not only the texts used in the prayers, but also other parts of the Ḳur'ān, or the whole of the Ḳur'ān, there arose the further question whether this might be achieved with the help of a translation.

The theologians and jurists who had to decide on this matter in general adopted a rigorous attitude. With regard to the recitation of the Fātiḥa in the ritual prayer, the Mālikīs, Shāfi'īs and Ḥanbalīs insisted that the text must be spoken in Arabic. In a case where the person praying could not recite the Fātiḥa in Arabic, he must substitute for it another passage from the Ḳur'ān, or observe a silent pause, or repeat the name of God for the same length of time. On the other hand it is reported that Abū Ḥanīfa had originally declared that the recital of the Fātiḥa in Persian was permitted without reservation; he later restricted this concession to those worshippers who were unable to speak Arabic. This then became the general rule for the Ḥanafī school. In similar circumstances other non-Arabic languages besides Persian might be employed.

As for the production and use of translations of the whole of the Ḳur'ān, the attitude of the scholars was that a "translation" of the Ḳur'ān in the true sense of the word was not possible. They based their attitude mainly on the argument that the wording of the Ḳur'ān is a miracle (*muʿdjiza*) incapable of imitation by man. This characteristic would be invalidated in a translation into a foreign language, since this would be made by man. Furthermore, the scholars maintained that a translation of the Ḳur'ān which was both literal and at the same time true to the meaning was not possible. They conceded, however, that a so-called translation (*tardjama*) in the sense of a commentary (*tafsīr*) might be used, on the assumption that the text of the original was not superseded by this. Thus manuscripts of the Ḳur'ān might be provided with an interlinear (quasi-)translation. In more recent times this was extended to the printing of the translation (as a commentary) beside the Arabic text. This is the practice which remains usual for translations made by Muslims.

The question whether in the ritual prayer texts from the Ḳur'ān may be recited in a non-Arabic language and whether the production and use of translations of the Ḳur'ān should be permitted became once again acute when in Turkey in the nineteen-twenties the authorities proceeded to "nationalise" the ritual prayers and to publish Turkish translations of the Ḳur'ān not accompanied by the Arabic original. Authoritative theologians found themselves induced once again to explain and to justify the orthodox standpoint by reference to earlier authorities.

The first statements were mainly of a polemical and negative nature. In the course of time, however, there prevailed a more eirenical judgement on the matter. Thus the Ḥanafī scholar of al-Azhar, Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī, in a thorough investigation first published in 1932, adopted the attitude that for a Muslim without a knowledge of Arabic the recital of the Ḳur'ānic texts prescribed for the prayer in an appropriate translation was absolutely obligatory (*wādjib*). The important thing in the prayer is the meaning of the text, not the character of the *iʿdjāz*. The true sense is, however, transmitted through a translation. Furthermore, it is not realistic to require the great mass of Muslims from the non-Arabic-speaking territories to learn Arabic on account of the Ḳur'ān. It is much more desirable and indispensable (according to Maḥmūd Shaltūt, even obligatory) for them to use translations, quite apart from their use in the prayer. The thesis that the Ḳur'ān in translation ceases to be the Word of God (*kalām Allāh*) is, according to Marāghī, valid only with reservations. The translation does not simply represent human speech (*kalām al-nās*), for although it does not contain the Word of God literally, yet its content consists of the meaning of God's Word.

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M. M. Moreno, *È lecito ai Musulmani tradurre il Corano?*, in *OM*, v (1925), 532-43; [Muḥammad Shākir], *On the translation of the Koran into foreign languages*, in *MW*, xvi (1926), 161-5; Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, *Tafsīr al-Manār*, ix, Cairo 1347, 314-53; J. Jomier, *Le commentaire coranique du Manār*, Paris 1954, 338-47; W. G. Shellabear, *Can a Moslem translate the Koran?*, in *MW*, xxi (1931), 287-303; Muḥammad al-Khiḍr Ḥusayn, *Nafī mā ʿunī ʾl-ḳurʾān*, in *Nūr al-Islām*, ii (1350), 122-32; Maḥmūd Abū Dakīka, *Kalima fī tarjamat al-ḳurʾān al-karīm*, *ibid*, iii (1351), 29-35; Ibrāhīm al-Djibālī, *al-Kalām fī tarjamat al-ḳurʾān*, *ibid.*, iii (1351), 57-65; Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī, *Baḥth fī tarjamat al-ḳurʾān al-karīm wa-aḥkāmihā*, in *Madjallat al-Azhar*, viii (1355), 77-112; Maḥmūd Shaltūt, *Tarjamat al-ḳurʾān wa-mawḳif al-ʿulamāʾ fihā*, *ibid.*, vii (1355), 123-34; A. L. Tibawi, *Is the Qurʾān translatable?*, in *MW*, lii (1962), 4-16; J. J. G. Jansen, *The interpretation of the Koran in modern Egypt*, Leiden 1974, 10 f. (R. PARET)

b. Translations into specific languages. The Ḳurʾān has been translated into most of the languages of Asia and Europe, and into some African ones. A Persian translation is said to have been made during the time of the Orthodox Caliphs by Salmān al-Fārisī, a Companion of the Prophet; one into Berber in 127/744-5; and a Sindhī one in 270/883-4; but none of these survives.

Bibliography: *Index translationum*, *passim*; the catalogues of the British Library, India Office Library, Cambridge University Library and others; J. C. Lobherr, *Dissertatio historico-philologico-theologica de Alcorani versionibus* . . . , Nuremberg 1704; C. F. Schnurrer, *Bibliotheca arabica*, Halle 1811; V. Chauvin, *Bibliographie des ouvrages arabes ou relatifs aux arabes* . . . x. *Le Coran et la tradition*, Liège and Leipzig 1910; M. Hamidullah, *Quran in every language*, Hyderabad Deccan 1939 (continued in *Pensée chiite*, iii-xii, 1960-2, revised ed. *France-Islam*, ii, 1967-); S. M. Zwemer, *Translations of the Koran*, in *MW*, v (1915), 244-61; W. S. Woolworth, *A bibliography of Koran texts and translations*, in *MW*, xvii (1927), 279-89.

1. Persian and Turkish. One of the oldest surviving works in the Persian language is the translation of the large Arabic *tafsīr* of Ṭabarī (d. Baghdād 310/923), which was made for Abū Ṣāliḥ Manṣūr b. Nūḥ, Sāmānid ruler of Transoxania and Khurāsān (350-66/961-76). The precise date is not recorded, but the Persian preface explains how it came to be made. Abū Ṣāliḥ, after questioning his *ʿulamāʾ* about the legality of translation of the Holy Book into Persian, decreed that this should be done by learned men from the cities of this realm. Several MSS. are mentioned by Storey, the earliest, at Rāmpūr, being dated *ca.* 600/1203-4. There is a Persian translation in Roman characters in the Vatican.

Possibly not much later is the Persian text, translation and commentary, copied (and perhaps composed) by one Muḥammad b. Abī ʾl-Fatḥ in 618/1231, which is preserved at Cambridge and described by E. G. Browne.

Storey lists 48 dated translations and commentaries, and in an appendix, 74 titled or quasi-titled commentaries, as well as a selection of 8 miscellaneous unidentified commentaries and specimens of the numerous anonymous translations to be found in Persian, Indian and other MS. collections, and some lithographs.

The Bregel-Borḳhčevsky Russian translation of Storey (*Persidskaya literatura*, Moscow 1972) records earlier MSS. of the Ṭabarī translation (Bursa 562/1166-7 and end of 6th/12th century), as well as some 250 other translations and commentaries.

The Persian translation of Ṭabarī's commentary was the basis for the first Turkish version, which Togan regards as its contemporary, but which Inan places in the first half of the 5th/11th century.

There are said to be over 70 translations into Turkish made from at least the 4th/11th century onwards, existing in many hundreds of MSS. in public and private collections, and these have frequently been printed. These are in various forms of the Turkic languages, Eastern and Western, and in the Uygur and Arabic scripts and in Roman characters, with at least four transliterations into Modern Turkish of the Arabic text.

Bibliography: E. G. Browne, *Description of an old Persian commentary on the Kurʾān*, in *JRAS* (1894), 417-524; A. Bodroligeti, *The Persian translation of the Koran in Latin letters*, in *Acta Or. Hung.* xiii (1961), 261-76; Zeki Velidi Togan, *The earliest translation of the Quran into Turkish*, in *Islam Tetkikleri Enst. Dergisi*, iv (1964), 1-19; Abdülkadir Inan, *Kurʾān-i Karīm'in Türkce tercümeleri üzerinde bir inceleme*, Ankara 1961; J. K. Birge, *Turkish translations of the Koran*, in *MW*, xxviii (1938), 394-9; J. Eckmann, *Eastern Turkic translations of the Koran*, in *Studia Turcica*, ed. L. Ligeti, 1971, 249-59; idem, *Middle Turkic glosses of the Rylands interlinear Koran translation*, Budapest 1976; Yasaroğlu, in M. Hamidullah, *Kurʾan-i Kerim tarihi ve türkçe tercümeler bibliyografyası*, Istanbul 1963.

2. Indo-Pakistani languages. Of the many Urdu versions, the earliest are said to have been made by Shāh ʿAbd al-Ḳādir [*q.v.*] and Shāh Rafīʿ al-Dīn, each of them an uncle of the celebrated preacher and scholar Muḥammad Ismāʿīl Shahīd [see ISMĀʿĪL SHAHĪD]. The British Museum Hindustani catalogue lists innumerable examples, including versions made by Christians and printed in Roman characters. Details may also be found in the bibliographies of the Andjuman-i taraḳḳi-yi Urdū Pākistān (i, Karachi 1961) and of ʿAbd al-Sattār Chaudharī (1974).

In the other Indo-Aryan and Dravidian languages, there are versions in Assamese, Bengali (innumerable; a 1908 version by Rev. Wm. Goldsack of 1908 is illustrated in *MW*, v (1915), 254-5), Gujarati, Hindī, Kashmirī, Marathī, Oriya, Panjabi (often combined with a Persian version and the Arabic text), Pashto, Sanskrit (Chauvin, x), Sindhī (surveyed by A. M. Schimmel in *Orients*, xvi (1963), 224-43), Sinhalese; and in the Dravidian languages, Malayalam, Tamil and Telegu.

3. South-East Asian. There are many translations into Malay and Indonesian mentioned in the catalogues and bibliographies, and into other Indonesian languages (Sundanese, Javanese, Macassarese and Bugiuese). A Burmese version with the Arabic text, by one Ḥādjdjī Nūr al-Dīn known as Ḥādjdjī Lā, published in 1938, may be found in the British Library (*BM. Arab. cat.*, 2nd suppl.), while Tinker mentions that a project to translate the Ḳurʾān into

that language was initiated by U Nu while Prime Minister in 1955. Two translations into Thai (one with Arabic text) of 1968 and 1971 are in the Wason Library at Cornell University.

Bibliography: *Catalogus van de Bibl. v. het Kon. Inst. v. Taal-, Land- en Volkenk.* and stippls.; Ockeloen, *Catalogus van boeken en tijdschriften uitgegeven in Ned. Oost-Indië*, 1870 (-1933); H. Tinker, art. BURMA.

4. Far Eastern (Chinese and Japanese). Several 19th and 20th century works contain selections in Chinese, sometimes with commentary. A MS. believed to date from about 1800 in the School of Oriental and African Studies, London University, gives "pieces from the Koran and prayers transcribed from the Arabic original in Chinese sounds". Translation into Chinese was recommended by Sakuma, a Japanese businessman and convert to Islam who, in 1925, founded the progressive but short-lived newspaper *Mu hiang*. Another source says that in that same year a complete translation was under consideration by the International Muslim Association. The British Museum has a *Kuo-yü ku-lan ching*, with commentary translated from English versions by Shih Tzu-chou and others (Taipei 1958).

Japanese versions by Toshihiko Izutsu and Tanaka Shiro were published in several editions in the nineteen-fifties, sixties and seventies.

Bibliography: *Un commentaire chinois du Coran*, in *RMM*, iv (1908), 540-7; L. Mason, *Notes on Chinese Mohammadan literature*, in *J. North China Branch RAS*, lvi (1925), 172-215; R. A. Syrdal, *Christ in the Chinese Koran*, in *MW*, xxvii (1937), 72-83.

5. Non-Islamic Near Eastern Languages. Three manuscripts of Hebrew translations exist (in Oxford, Cambridge and the Library of Congress), the first two made from the Italian of Arrivabene, the third from the Dutch of Glazemaker. All of these predate the translation of Hermann (Hayyim) Reckendorf, Leipzig 1857, made direct from the Arabic. Two further translations have since appeared: by Joseph Joel Rivlin (Tel Aviv 1936-41, 1963[2]) and by Aharon Ben-Shemesh (Ramath Gan 1971).

Quotations from the Ḳur'ān, in Syriac, appear in a polemical work against Jews, Nestorians and Muslims by the West Syrian writer Barṣalībī (d. 1171), which exists in a manuscript now in the John Rylands University Library in Manchester, and in another in the Harvard University Semitic Museum. It is doubtful if a complete Syriac translation ever existed.

In the Bhopal State Library is to be found a Ḳur'ān in classical Armenian, translated from the Latin by Stephanos of Ilov, a monk of Echmiadzin. This MS., in a "simply perfect calligraphy", lacks title-page and date but is thought to be of the first half of the 17th century. A printed translation, with a life of Muḥammad, by Leron Lerēnc', made from the French versions of Savary and Kazimirski, was published in Istanbul (pt. 3 in 1912).

A Georgian version (Tiflis 1906) is in the Wardrop Collection in the Bodleian Library.

Bibliography: M. M. Weinstein, *A Hebrew Qur'ān manuscript*, in *Studies in bibliography and booklore* (Cincinnati), x (1972-3), 19-43; A. Mingana, *An ancient Syriac translation of the Ḳur'ān*, in *Bull. John Rylands Libr.*, ix (1925), 288-235, and repr.; J. Rendel Harris, *The new text of the Ḳur'ān*, *ibid.*, x (1926), 219-22; Mesrob J. Seth, *A manuscript Koran in Classical Armenian*, in *JASB*, N.S. xix (1929), 291-4.

6. African languages. There are three translations of the Ḳur'ān into Swahili: Christian, Aḥmadī and Sunnī Shāfi'ī. The earliest, made by Godfrey Dale, a missionary with the Universities Mission for Central Africa, was published by the S.P.C.K. in London in 1923. It contains over 700 *masāʾala* (explanatory comments or notes) by Dale or his colleague, G. W. Broomfield.

The Aḥmadī version (Nairobi 1953, 1971[2]) was made by Shaykh Mubārak Aḥmadī, chief missionary of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Mission in East Africa, while the Sunnī Shāfi'ī version, by Shaykh 'Abd Allāh Ṣāliḥ al-Fārsī, was published in fascicules between 1956 and 1962 at Zanzibar, in a one-volume edition in Bangalore (1949), and by the Islamic Foundation at Nairobi in 1976.

Other African-language versions exist in Yoruba (Rev. M. S. Cole, Lagos 1924), Ganda (Uganda Aḥmadiyya Muslim Mission, 1965) and Amharic (Artistic Press, Addis Ababa, 1961). Possible versions in Berber are discussed by Henri Basset, see *Bibl.*

Bibliography: H. Basset, *Essai sur la littérature des Berbères*, Algiers 1920, 63-4; G. Dale, *A Swahili translation of the Koran*, in *MW*, xiv (1924), 5-9; V. Monteil, *Un Coran ahmadi en Swahili*, in *Bull. IFAN*, xxix, B (1967), 479-95; J. D. Holway, *The Qur'ān in Swahili; three translations*, in *MW*, lxi (1971), 102-10.

7. European languages. The Latin paraphrase made by Robert of Ketton at the behest of Peter the Venerable, abbot of Cluny, and completed in 1143, exists in the autograph of the translator in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal in Paris. Robert is said to have been "always liable to heighten or exaggerate a harmless text to give it a nasty or licentious sting, or to prefer an improbable but unpleasant interpretation of the meaning to a likely but normal and decent one" (N. Daniel, *Islam and the West, the making of an image*, Edinburgh 1960, see Index, s.v. Ketton). The work of Robert formed the basis for several mediaeval versions, but was apparently unknown to another early translator, Marc of Toledo. It was recopied in the 17th century by Dominicus Germanus, whose work exists in Montpellier, the Escurial and elsewhere, and was published in the Cluniac corpus, together with various other works of Christian propaganda, by Theodor Bibliander (Buchmann) in three editions at Basel in 1543, and one at Zürich in 1550 containing a preface by Martin Luther.

The first translation in a modern European language was the Italian version of Andrea Arrivabene, published in 1547. Though its author claims that it is made directly from the Arabic, it is clearly a translation or paraphrase of Robert of Ketton's text as published by Bibliander. Arrivabene's version was used for the first German translation made by Solomon Schweigger, preacher at the Frauenkirche in Nürnberg, which in turn formed the basis of the first Dutch translation, made anonymously and issued in 1641.

The first French version by André du Ryer, "Sieur de la Garde Malezais", came out in a great many editions between 1647 and 1775. All editions contain a "summary of the religion of the Turks" and other documents. This gave rise to the first Koran in English by Alexander Ross, and also fathered versions in Dutch (by Glazemaker), German (Lange) and Russian (Postnikov and Veryovkin).

The second Latin version was made directly from the Arabic text by Ludovico Marraci (or Marracci), published first in 1698 and secondly, with additions and annotations, by Reinecclus in 1721. It was translated into German by Nerreter.

The 18th century brought translations made directly from an Arabic original by Sale into English (first published in 1734), Savary (French, 1751) and Boysen (German, 1773). Sale's version was in vogue in the English-speaking world for nearly two centuries: his renowned preliminary discourse, based, according to Nallino, on Marracci and Edward Pococke senior, was translated into several European languages. It was even translated into Arabic by Protestant missionaries in Egypt.

Savary's version was, according to Chauvin, evidently made from the Latin of Marracci: it bears the distinction of having been published in Mecca in A.H. 1165 (or so the title-page of one edition states!). Kasimirski, whose translation has also had a long run, and indeed like that of Savary, is still being republished in our own time, was requested by Pauthier to revise Savary. He preferred, however, to make a new translation directly from the Arabic while consulting the works of Marracci and Sale.

Throughout the 19th century, the translations were normally made without remove from the Arabic. In the 20th century, the first English versions made by Muslims appear, and the Aḥmadiyya movement began to issue the Ḳur'ān text with translations into European and even African languages. In recent times translations have been made by many of the most prominent Arabists and Islamic scholars into all the main languages of Europe, undeterred by the dictum of A. Fischer that only second or third-grade scholars dared to undertake this task.

Conspectus of European Language Versions:

Afrikaans. Anon. 1950. M. A. Baker, 1962.

Bulgarian. Lica, 1902-5. Tomov and Skulov, ca. 1930. (*MW*, xxiii [1933], 289-90.)

Czech. Vesely, 1913-25. Nykl, 1934. Hrbek, 1972. (A. Schimmel, *Die neue tschechische Koranübersetzung*, in *WO* vii [1973-4], 134-62.)

Danish. Madsen, 1967. Selections in chronological order, Buhl, 1921, 1954[2].

Dutch. Anon., 1641. Glazemaker, 1658, 1696, 1698, 1707, 1721, 1734. Tollens, 1859. Keyzer, 1860, 1879. Bashīr al-Dīn Aḥmad (Aḥmadiyya), 1953. Kramers, 1956, 1965, 1969.

English. Versions by Christians: Ross, 1649, 1688, 1719, 1806. Sale, 1734-1892; American versions 1833-1923. Rodwell, 1861, 1876, 1909 (often reprinted to 1963). Palmer, 1880, 1900 (often reprinted to 1965). Bell, 1937-9. Arberry, 1955 (repr. 1963, 1964, 1969, 1971). Many versions by orthodox Muslims including Pickthall, 1930 etc., bilingual eds. 1938, 1976. A. Yusuf Ali, 1934, etc.; Dawood, 1956 etc. and by the Aḥmadiyya.

Finnish. Ahsen Börc, 1942. Aro, 1957.

French. Du Ryer, many editions, 1647-1775. Savary, 1751-1960. Kasimirski 1840-1970. Fatma-Zaida, 1861. Montet, 1929. Laimèche, 1931. Peslc and Tidjani, 1936. Blachère, 1949-50, 1957, 1966. Rajabalee (Mauritius) 1949-. Mercier, 1956. Ghedira, 1957. Hamidullah, 1959, 1966. Masson, 1967. Si Boubakeur Hamza, 1972.

German. Schweigger, 1616, 1623, 1659. Lange, 1688. Nemeter 1703. Arnold, 1746. Megerlin, 1772. Boysen, 1773, 1775. Wahl, 1828. Ullmann, 1840-1939 (10 editions). Grigull, 1901, n.d. Henning, 1901, 1960, 1968. Goldschmidt, 1916. Aubiar, 1957. Sadr-ud-Din, 1939. Aḥmadiyya versions, 1954, 1959. Paret, 1962, 1977, paperback ed. 1979, second ed. 1980.

Greek. Pentake, 1878, 1886, etc. Zographou-Maraniou, 1959.

Hungarian. Sadmajer, 1831 (*MW* [1917]). Szokolay, 1854.

Italian. Arrivabene, 1547, 1548, 1912. Calza, 1847. Anon., 1882, 1912, 1973. Fracassi, 1914. Bonelli, 1929, 1940 (repr. 1948, 1956). Bausani, 1955, 1961. Moreno, 1967, 1969. Violante, n.d.

Latin. Robert of Ketton, 1543, 1550. Marracci, 1698, 1721.

Polish. Sobolewski, ? 1828. Buczacki, 1858.

Portuguese. Anon., 1882. Castro, 1964.

Rumanian. Isopescul, 1912.

Russian. Postnikov, 1716. Veryovkin, 1790. Koimakov, 1792. Nikolaev, 1864-1901 (5 editions). Boguslavski, 1871 (MS. only, *Bull. N.Y. Publ. Library*, xli, 101). Sablukov, 1877-9, 1894-8, 1907. Krimskiy, 1902, 1905, 1916? Kračkovskiy, 1963.

Serbo-Croat. Ljubibratić, 1895. Pandža and Čaušević, 1936, 1936, 1969. Karabeg, 1937. (A. Popović, *Sur une nouvelle traduction du Coran en serbo-croate*, in *Arabica*, xx [1973], 82-4).

Spanish. Gerber de Robles, 1844. Ortiz de la Puebla, 1872. Murguiondo, 1875. Anon., 1931. Bergua, 1931 (9 editions to 1970). Cansinos Assens, 1951 (5 editions to 1963). Vernet Ginés, 1953, 1963. Anon., 1960. Cardona Castro, 1965. Anon., 1965. Hernández Catá, n.d. García Bravo, n.d. Anon., n.d.

Swedish. Crusenstolpe, 1843. Tornberg, 1874. Zetterstéen, 1917. Ohlmarks, 1961.

There also exist partial translations in Albanian and Norwegian, and the MS. of a Ukranian version by Volodymyr Lazevyc (Hamidullah, *Le Coran*[5], 1966, p. lxv).

Bibliography: J. Kritzeck, *Robert of Ketton's translation of the Qur'an*, in *IQ*, ii (1955), 309-12; M. Th. d'Alverny, *Deux traductions latines du Coran au Moyen Age*, in *Archives hist. doctr. litt. Moyen Age*, xxii-xxiv (1947-8), 69-131; W. Ḥ[öhler], *Zu Biblianders Koran-Ausgabe*, in *Zwingliana*, iii (1913-20), 349-50; M. Th. d'Alverny, G. Vajda, *Marc de Tolède, traducteur d'Ibn Tumart*, in *And.* xvi (1951), 99-140, 259-307, xvii (1952), 1-56, esp. xvi, 260-8; C. de Frede, *La prima traduzione italiana del Corano ...*, Naples 1967; Denison Ross, *Ludovico Marracci*, in *BSOS*, ii (1922-3), 227-23; C. Nallino, *Le fonti arabe manoscritte dell' opera di Ludovico Marracci sul Corano*, in *Rend. Accad. Lincei*, Cl. Sci. mor. stor. filol., ser. 5, vii (1931), 303-49; A. Bausani, *On some recent translations of the Qur'ān*, in *Numen*, iv (1957), 75-81; W. A. Bijlefeld, *Some recent contributions to Qur'anic studies*, in *MW*, lxiv (1974), 79-102, 172-9, 259-74; A. Fischer, *Der Wert der vorhandenen Koran-Übersetzungen und Sure* 111, Leipzig 1937; M. Hamidullah, *Le Coran, traduction intégrale, avec une bibliographie de toutes les traductions ... en langues européennes*, Paris 1966[2]; J. Vernet, *Traducciones moriscas de* El Corán, in *Der Orient in der Forschung, Festschrift für Otto Spies*, Wiesbaden 1967, 686-705; J. D. Pearson, *Bibliography of translations of the Koran into European languages*, in *Cambridge history of Arabic literature* (forthcoming).

(J. D. PEARSON)

AL-KŪRĀNĪ, IBRĀHĪM B. AL-SHAHRAZŪRĪ AL-ḤASAN SHAHRĀNĪ, AL-MADANĪ (1023-1101/1615-90), scholar and mystic, born in Shahrazūr in the mountains of Kurdistān on the frontiers of Persia. He studied first in Turkey, then in Persia, 'Irāḳ, Syria and Egypt before settling in Medina. In one of his works, *Masālik al-abrār ilā ḥadīth al-nabī al-mukhtār* (Ms. Dār al-Kutub, Cairo, Taṣawwuf, 55-6), he refers to a period of 3 months at the Azhar in 1061/1650, where he studied with Shaykh Nūr al-Dīn 'Alī b. 'Alī al-Shabrāmallisī, *Imām* of the Azhar until 1087/1677, the whole *Tayyār fī 'l-bihā'ī al-sab'*